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**Public Theology in Post-1997 Hong Kong:
The Perspectives of Anglican Theologians, Scholars in Sino-Christian Theology, and
Evangelical Theologians, and a Critical Engagement with Stanley Hauerwas's Theology**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis offers the first major study of the developments of Protestant public theology in Hong Kong. The thesis evaluates some of the major expressions of public theology that have arisen since 1997, referring to the period after which Hong Kong returned to China, and including the growing discourses of public theology during, but not limited to, the Umbrella Movement in 2014. The main groups of theologians investigated in this thesis are Anglican theologians, scholars in Sino-Christian theology, and evangelical theologians. These three groups tend to prioritise one of the three publics articulated by David Tracy—society, academia, and church—though they also engage other publics.

Anglican theologians have focused on the public of society, due to their commitment of collaborating with the state, the Hong Kong government and the People's Republic of China, which highlights the polity realm in this public. A key representative of this group is Paul Kwong, Archbishop of Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui, because of his active engagement with both the state and the Anglican Consultative Council as a way to testify God.

Scholars in Sino-Christian theology are known for their development of public theology in the public of the academy. A key figure of the Institute of Sino-Christian Studies, Lai Pan-chiu, a scholar in Sino-Christian theology at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, has produced a number of articles and a monograph about public theology under the umbrella of Sino-Christian theology.

As relative latecomers in this discourse, evangelical theologians tend to develop public theologies for its main public, the church. Because of the political apathy for a number of

evangelical churches in the Umbrella Movement, different theologians seek to create a theological response to the political crisis. While this type of public theology still has church as the primary audience, the church becomes a vehicle for a secondary audience, the society. Kwok Wai-luen, a theologian of Christian and Missionary Alliance at Hong Kong Baptist University, is a key figure among this group of theologians, due to his active partnership with different social movement organisations as well as his prolific writings on Protestant social participation.

Along with evaluating these three groups, this thesis further argues that Stanley Hauerwas's emphasis on the church's communal witnesses can be employed to enrich the dialogue with these three groups of theologians, in relation to their primary publics. The alternative witness proposed by Hauerwas can be helpful for both Christians and non-Christians in Hong Kong for facing the political turbulence raised by the concerns of nonviolence and the church's engagement in democratic movements. Hauerwas's ecclesiology assists to connect the public theologies in these three different publics and suggests an approach to be distinct from the world, while not completely detached from society. The thesis also offers some preliminary observations of public theology for Hong Kong in the midst of the anti-extradition law protests, as public theologians continue their dialogue after the Umbrella Movement.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Terminology

ABS	Alliance Bible Seminary
BCHK	Baptist Convention of Hong Kong
CGST	China Graduate School of Theology
CCCOWE	Chinese Coordination Centre of World Evangelism
CUHK	Chinese University of Hong Kong
C&MA	Christian and Missionary Alliance
CSHK	Christian Sentinels for Hong Kong
CHSKH	Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui
DSCCC	Divinity School of Chung Chi College
EFCC	Evangelical Free Church of China
ELCHK	Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong
HKBTS	Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary
HKBU	Hong Kong Baptist University
HKCC	Hong Kong Christian Council
HKCCCC	Hong Kong Council Church of Christ in China
HKFES	Hong Kong Fellowship of Evangelical Students
HKSKH	Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui
LTS	Lutheran Theological Seminary
MCHK	Methodist Church, Hong Kong
OCLP	Occupy Central for Love and Peace
SMO	Social Movement Organisation
TSPM	Three-Self Patriotic Movement

INTRODUCTION

Public theology is necessarily always contextual. It responds to situations, theories and issues which change over time, while endeavouring to hold fast to a tradition which has a constant core.

–Duncan B. Forrester, 2004¹

In Hong Kong, public theology is a growing discourse. It is perhaps most prominently seen through the historic Anglican church in Hong Kong in its relationships with the British colonial government and, after 1997, with Beijing. It is also increasingly part of the academic field of Sino-Christian theology (*Hanyu shenxue*),² with its main academic centre established in Hong Kong in the 1990s, especially among those scholars drawing from such North American authors as the Catholic scholar David Tracy (b. 1939) and the Reformed theologian Max Stackhouse (1935–2016). Outside of these two major strands, there has been a growing interest in Anabaptist theology, although it is still an underdeveloped discussion topic. Some evangelical theologians, especially those from the Baptist Convention of Hong Kong (BCHK), have denied the necessity of constructing a dialogue regarding public theology.³ However, they have often been seen to

¹ Duncan B. Forrester, 'The Scope of Public Theology', *Studies in Christian Ethics* 17, 2 (2004): 6.

² Sino-Christian theology is a form of theological discourse which is expressed in the Chinese language and is not bound to a specific geopolitical region. For a detailed definition, see He Guanghu, 'Hanyu shenxue de genju he yiyi' [The Basis and Significance of Sino-Christian Theology], *Regent Chinese Journal* 2 (1996): 39–47.

³ For example, Andres Siu-kwong Tang, Professor of Christian Thought at the Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary (HKBTS) and a PhD graduate of the University of St Andrews, and Freeman Chi-wai Huen, Assistant Professor of Practical Theology at the HKBTS, argue that the general conversation on public theology is not theological enough to be called theology. For details, see Andres Tang, 'Gonggong shenxue, shenme yang de shenxue? Yixie genben de fansi' [Public Theology, What Theology? Some Radical Reflections], *Shandao qikan* [Hill Road] 31 (July 2013): 5–30; Freeman Huen, 'Gonggong shenxue/ shui de "gonggong"? You ji "shenxue"? [Public Theology/Whose 'Public'? How 'Theological'?], *Shandao qikan* [Hill Road] 31 (July 2013): 31–63.

draw from the writings of Anabaptist-informed theologians of the Global North, such as John H. Yoder (1927–1997) and Stanley Hauerwas (b. 1940),⁴ both of whom are outspoken intellectuals in the public theological discourse. Hence, this thesis is one of the first attempts to investigate the Hong Kong discourse of public theology with particular attention paid to Anglicans, scholars in Sino-Christian theology, and evangelical theologians.

It should be noted that despite my attempt to distinguish these three groups, they do have common characteristics; for example, the first two groups, Anglicans and scholars in Sino-Christian theology share some elements of evangelicalism, which has been identified as the dominant expression of Asian Protestantism.⁵ The element of conversionism, indicating one's conversion from other religions, as well as that of crucicentrism, which emphasises Christ's saving acts on the cross, can also be found in these two groups.⁶ While the term 'evangelicalism' will be elaborated in later sections, it is not my intention to pigeonhole these three groups as if they have no similarity between each other. Nonetheless, mindful of the growing discourse of public theology and the relatively new developments among evangelicals in Hong Kong, this thesis will further aim to construct a public theology that addresses the Hong Kong context, drawing on the theology of Stanley Hauerwas.

Literature Review

Although public theology is still a relatively new academic subject in the Hong Kong

⁴ Although Stanley Hauerwas grew up in the American Methodist tradition, he stated in 2017, 'I have, moreover, described my ecclesial identity as being a high church Mennonite'. See Stanley Hauerwas, 'After the Reformation: How to Be Neither Catholic nor Protestant', *ABC Religion and Ethics*, 1 November 2017, <http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2017/11/01/4758549.htm>.

⁵ Simon Chan, 'Evangelical Theology in Asian Contexts', in *The Cambridge Companion to Evangelical Theology*, ed. Timothy Larsen and Daniel J. Treier (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 225–227.

⁶ For details, see David W. Bebbington and David Ceri Jones, *Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism in the United Kingdom during the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5–10.

context, the public role of religion in Hong Kong has been discussed among a number of scholars. Eric Chun-wah Kwong, Associate Professor of World Religion at the Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary (HKBTS),⁷ investigated the public role of Confucianism, Daoism, Buddhism, and Christianity from 1984, the year the Sino-British Joint Declaration was signed, to 1997, the year Hong Kong was returned to China as a special administrative region (SAR). In his research, Kwong expresses concerns about the authoritarian rule of Tung Chee-hwa (Dong Jianhua; b. 1937), the first Chief Executive of Hong Kong;⁸ however, we see that more than twenty years after the Handover, religions have not experienced obvious persecution, despite the relationship between church and state not being as close as it was before 1997.⁹ This is further explored by Lida V. Nedilsky, Professor of Sociology at North Park University,¹⁰ who highlights how some Hong Kong Christians were not satisfied with being Sunday Christians and attempted to acquire a new identity as socially concerned Christians.¹¹ Hence, many of them volunteered for or worked in Christian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to build and support a civil society in Hong Kong.¹² Although Nedilsky's research covers the first ten years of Hong Kong as an SAR, her methodology is more of a social scientific approach and does not mention the necessary theological response from churches in Hong Kong.

⁷ 'Eric Kwong', Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed 30 April 2010, <https://www.hkbts.edu.hk/Common/Reader/News/ShowNews.jsp?Nid=17554&Pid=54&Version=0&Cid=558&Charset=iso-8859-1>.

⁸ Kwong Chun-wah, *The Public Role of Religion in Post-Colonial Hong Kong: An Historical Overview of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Christianity* (Hong Kong: Peter Lang, 2002), 115–131.

⁹ Kwong, *The Public Role of Religion in Post-Colonial Hong Kong*, 163–164.

¹⁰ 'Lida Nedilsky', North Park University, accessed 30 April 2020, <https://www.northpark.edu/faculty-staff-directory/lida-nedilsky/>.

¹¹ Lida V. Nedilsky, *Converts to Civil Society: Christianity and Political Culture in Contemporary Hong Kong* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014), 87.

¹² Nedilsky, *Converts to Civil Society*, 131–132.

Kwok Nai-wang, a BD graduate of Yale Divinity School ordained at the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China,¹³ has attempted to analyse the relationship between Hong Kong churches and civil society. When he wrote his book *1997: Hong Kong's Struggle for Selfhood* in the mid-1990s, he suggested that, to prepare for the Handover, Hong Kong churches should follow the example set by churches in the 1960s and 1970s, when most of the churches in Hong Kong were showing more concern for society and speaking about public issues.¹⁴ Although his comments are still valid today, his writings may not reflect the challenges the church currently faces, especially in the worsened sociopolitical situation after the Umbrella Movement.¹⁵

Arnold Muk-kuk Yeung (1945–2002), a theology lecturer at the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), aimed to develop a theology of reconciliation for Hong Kongese in the 1980s to respond to their anxiety about the return of Hong Kong to the PRC. As one of the first major monographs that constructed a Hong Kong theology in response to its society's unclear future, *Fu he shenxue yu jiaohui gengxin* [*Theology of Reconciliation and Church Renewal*], first published in 1987, illustrated his attempt to provide guidance for the church to be a renewing community relying on God, despite the wound that developed in the uncertainty of the Sino-British negotiations in the early 1980s.¹⁶

¹³ Kwok Nai-wang, 'Shou fang renshi: Guo Naihong' [Interviewee: Kwok Nai-Wang], interviewed by Kwok Wai-Luen, *Xianggang jidutu koushu ji wenxian shi yanjiu: 1970 nian zhi 1997 nian de zongjiao lunshu, shehui canyu ji shenfen jiangou* [*An Oral and Documentary History of Hong Kong Protestant Christians: Religious Discourse, Social Participation, and Identity Construction from 1970 to 1997*], Hong Kong Baptist University, 19 April 2016, <https://digital.lib.hkbu.edu.hk/christianhistory/interviewee.php?interviewee=KNW>.

¹⁴ Kwok Nai-wang, *1997: Hong Kong's Struggle for Selfhood* (Hong Kong: Daga Press, 1996), 101–104.

¹⁵ The main purpose of the Umbrella Movement is to seek universal suffrage from the Chief Executive of Hong Kong. Started on 26 September 2014 with the occupation of the Civil Square, an open area of the headquarters of the Hong Kong Government, it lasted for seventy-nine days. See Rishi Lyengar, '6 Questions You Might Have About Hong Kong's Umbrella Revolution', *Time*, 5 October 2014, <http://time.com/3471366/hong-kong-umbrella-revolution-occupy-central-democracy-explainer-6-questions/>.

¹⁶ Arnold Yeung, *Fu he shenxue yu jiaohui gengxin* [*Theology of Reconciliation and Church Renewal*] (Hong Kong: Renewal Hong Kong, 2012), xxv–xxxiii.

Between 1997 and 2014, Lai Pan-chiu, a scholar in Sino-Christian theology, contributed abundantly on the subject of public theology, partly because of his return to Hong Kong in 1996 to take up a lectureship at the CUHK. His research demonstrates how public theology is to be understood in the Sinosphere and has addressed the complexity of Hong Kong identity due to Hong Kong's becoming an SAR.¹⁷ Another voice offering a public theology in Hong Kong is Paul Kwong (b. 1950), who was installed as Archbishop of Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui (HKSKH), the Anglican Church in Hong Kong, in 2007. His PhD thesis, completed in 2008 and published as *Identity in Community* in 2011, discussed a theology based on the dual identity of Hong Kong citizens as Hong Kongese and as Chinese, to respond to the increasing tension of Hong Kong citizens and Chinese immigrants both within and outside churches.¹⁸

Since 2014, the year the Umbrella Movement took place, there have been a growing number of essays on Hong Kong public theology. Justin Tse, Assistant Professor of Humanities at Singapore Management University, and Jonathan Tan, Professor of Catholic Studies at Case Western Reserve University, have co-edited a volume to reflect theologically on the Umbrella Movement.¹⁹ The essays in this volume were originally presented in a panel entitled 'The Umbrella Movement and Theology' organised by *Syndicate: A New Forum for Theology* in November 2014, when the Movement was still ongoing.²⁰ The volume shows initial responses to the Umbrella Movement and how theologians can employ liberation theology that speaks for the mass and the poor in the Movement.

¹⁷ Lai Pan-chiu, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue—cong shenxue dao jidu zongjiao yanjiu* [Sino-Christian Theology in the Public Square—From Theology to Christian Studies] (Hong Kong: Logos and Pneuma Press, 2014), 263–310.

¹⁸ Paul Kwong, *Identity in Community: Towards a Theological Agenda for the Hong Kong SAR* (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2011).

¹⁹ Justin K.H. Tse and Jonathan Y. Tan (Ed.), *Theological Reflections on the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement: Asian Christianity in the Diaspora* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

²⁰ Justin K.H. Tse, 'The Umbrella Movement and Theology: A Special Symposium', *Syndicate*, 15 November 2014, <https://syndicate.network/symposia/theology/the-umbrella-movement-and-theology/>.

One of the respondents on this panel, the Lutheran scholar Kung Lap-yan, advanced the dialogue of Hong Kong public theology. In this contribution to the volume, he reflected on how churches can be inclusive in light of the rise of both local exclusivism and Chinese patriotism.²¹ Despite the absence of references to liberation theology in this essay, Kung has employed liberation theology in other writings to engage with public discourses, which is also shown in his 1994 PhD thesis.²² Notably, in 2013, Kung criticised the arguments of ‘Hong Kong Hauerwasians’ (*Gangshi Houpai*)—a group of Baptist theologians emphasising the separation of the church from the world—because, for Kung, the church itself is not perfect.²³ He suggests that the church needs the world so that it can witness God’s work outside of itself and not become self-righteous.²⁴

As one of the first Christian bloggers who coined the term ‘Hong Kong Hauerwasian’ in 2012,²⁵ Ku Pan commented that the rise of Hong Kong Hauerwasian between 2010 and 2015 could be seen as ‘the Hauerwas miracle’ (*Houhuoshi qiji*). For him, this miracle ‘[became] a social phenomenon, not [exactly] discussing Hauerwas’s own theological literature or his cultural imaginaries’.²⁶ Extending Ku’s argument, Chin Ken-pa, the Taiwanese public theologian at Fu Jen Catholic University, even criticised the Hong Kong Hauerwasians for downgrading

²¹ Kung Lap-yan, ‘The Umbrella Movement and Kairos: The Church’s Theological Encounter with a Political Movement’, in *Theological Reflections on the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement: Asian Christianity in the Diaspora*, ed. Justin K.H. Tse and Jonathan Y. Tan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 104–126.

²² Kung Lap-yan, ‘Christian Discipleship Today’, PhD diss., University of Glasgow, 1994.

²³ Here Kung mainly challenges Huen’s article in *Kuangye*, based on Hauerwas’s theory. For details, see Ho Siu-pan’s notes on Kung’s lecture, Ho Siu-pan, *Shen piao: Bendi shenxue zhaji 10 tang ke* [My Journey to God: Theological Reflections of 10 Local Lectures] (Hong Kong: VW Link, 2016), 85–88; Freeman Huen, ‘Houhuoshi de shenxue lunlixue’ [Hauerwas’s Theological Ethics], *Kuangye* [The Wilderness], July–August 2013, <http://www.cap.org.tw/W/w-184-2.html>.

²⁴ Kung, ‘Disike’, 97.

²⁵ Note that he first coined the term ‘*Gangshi Houhuoshi pai*’, with the same meaning of ‘Hong Kong Hauerwasian’ but without abbreviation. See Ku Pan, ‘Jidujiao zhengzhi zhi di san tiao lu tantao’ [An Evaluation of the Third Way of Christian Politics], *Piaoliu zhizuo* [Diaspora Production], Facebook, 9 December 2012, <https://bit.ly/3bh640H>.

²⁶ Ku Pan, ‘Houhuoshi qiji’ [The Hauerwas Miracle], *Piaoliu zhizuo* [Diaspora Production], Facebook, 9 November 2015, <https://bit.ly/2wRoKVO>.

public theology into a ‘eunuch’s theology’, a wordplay on the Chinese word for ‘public’.²⁷

Although Chin’s accusation is slightly exaggerated, as Ku has rightly observed, it is undoubtedly true that the rise of the Hong Kong Hauerwasians could be considered a social phenomenon that attempted to engage public dialogue theologically, emphasising Hauerwas’s idiom ‘letting church be church’ in the Hong Kong context. Their position represents a different perspective on public theology, although it can be contested whether their theologies are truly Hauerwasian. Therefore, one of the aspects of this thesis is an exploration into Hauerwas’s theology, both from the Hong Kong Hauerwasians and Hauerwas himself, to enrich the discourse of public theology in post-1997 Hong Kong.

Research Questions

My primary research question is as follows: in what ways has public theology been interpreted among Hong Kong Protestant scholars during the post-1997 era, especially by (1) Anglican theologians, (2) scholars in Sino-Christian theology, and (3) evangelical theologians, and how can it be enhanced by a dialogue with the theology of Stanley Hauerwas, in light of the latter’s understanding of the church as an alternative community?

From this primary question, the subsidiary questions flowing from the primary one are as follows:

1. In what ways does the absence of a state church in Hong Kong affect these theologians’ understanding of church-state relations and public theology, if any?
2. In what ways are their public theologies derived from those of the Global North, if at all, and how has the religious and sociopolitical climate of Hong Kong,

²⁷ Chin Ken-pa, ‘Shi shui ba gonggong shenxue yange zuo gonggong shenxue (shang)’ [Who Castrated Public Theology as ‘Eunuch’s Theology’], *Shidai* [*Christian Times*], 18 September 2013, <https://bit.ly/3cpKN4T>.

especially after the Umbrella Movement in 2014, resulted in a more contextualised form of public theology?

3. Whereas Anglicans and scholars in Sino-Christian theology have been active for many decades, and more recently among evangelical theologians, in what ways can public theology be developed further by drawing from Hauerwasian discourses?

Structure of the Thesis

To answer the primary research question, it is first important to briefly explore the public theology which was beginning to be developed in Hong Kong before 1997 and the type of environment that nurtured its growth. Hence, Chapter 1 highlights several key events in the period between 1949 and 1997 that have given shape to the nature of public theology after Hong Kong returned to Mainland China. The chapter aims to analyse the type of church-state relationship consolidated between the colonial government and Hong Kong churches. Additionally, given that there has been an increasing interest in public theology since 1997, the chapter also overviews major events that caused the political apathy among churches in colonial Hong Kong.

Continuing with the church and state relationship in colonial Hong Kong, Chapter 2 navigates the public theology of the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui (HKSKH), the Anglican Church in Hong Kong.²⁸ In Hong Kong, Anglican leaders have historically had a close relationship with the government, both the pre-1997 British colonial government and the post-1997 SAR government, and some of them have been part of the Chinese People's Political

²⁸ Throughout this thesis, all the names for people and organisations will be given with the most commonly known version, followed by *pinyin* romanisation, when appropriate. See the Chinese-English glossary at the end of this thesis.

Consultative Conference (CPPCC), the political advisory body of the People's Republic of China (PRC).²⁹ Thus, the public theology of this group of theologians has developed from its close relationship with the state, that is, the two entities of Hong Kong SAR and the PRC. The key Anglican theologian to be studied in this chapter is Paul Kwong (b. 1950), the current Archbishop of Hong Kong since 2007, who completed his PhD at the University of Birmingham in 2008. Other Anglicans to be investigated include Timothy Chi-pei Kwok (b. 1959),³⁰ the bishop of the diocese of Eastern Kowloon since 2014, who also received his PhD from the University of Birmingham in 2014, and Philip Wickeri (b. 1947), Professor of Church History at the HKSKH Ming Hua Theological College, theological advisor to the archbishop in the Anglican Province of Hong Kong and the series editor on Anglican Christianity for Hong Kong University Press.³¹

Chapter 3 investigates scholars of Sino-Christian theology in Hong Kong. In short, Sino-Christian theology is a form of theological discourse which is expressed in the Chinese language and is therefore not bound to a specific geopolitical region, whether one is discussing mainland China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, or other Sinophone contexts.³² As such, scholars in this broad Sinophone field include figures such as the Mainland Chinese thinkers Liu Xiaofeng and He Guanghu, as well as the Taiwan-based Malaysian philosopher Chin Ken-pa. However, the scholars discussed in this thesis are much more focused on the Hong Kong context and produce

²⁹ For example, Paul Kwong, the current Archbishop of Hong Kong, was appointed as a member of the CPPCC in February 2013. See 'Gangqu zhengxie dou xinren jingying yunji han gejie' [Many New Hong Kong Members in the Political Consultative Conference, Consisting of Elites from Different Industries], *Wenweipo*, 3 February 2013, <http://paper.wenweipo.com/2013/02/03/HK1302030001.htm>.

³⁰ Timothy Kwok, 'Beyond Binary Opposition: Hybridity and Reconciliation in the Context of Hong Kong', PhD diss., University of Birmingham, 2014.

³¹ Although Wickeri's writings are mainly on the public presence of churches in Mainland China, because he is Advisor to the Archbishop of Hong Kong, that is, Paul Kwong, it is worth studying his opinions on the church-state relationship, which may directly influence Kwong's public theology. See Philip L. Wickeri, *Reconstructing Christianity in China: K.H. Ting and the Chinese Church* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007).

³² He, 'Hanyu shenxue de genju he yiyi', 39–47.

literature on public theology as part of Sino-Christian theology. The chapter also highlights the significant role of the Institute of Sino-Christian Studies (ISCS), an academic institution situated at Tao Fong Shan, Hong Kong that promotes Sino-Christian theology. In contrast to the other two groups discussed in this thesis, as a group, scholars in Sino-Christian theology are not affiliated with any one denomination in Hong Kong and their public theology mainly focuses on the academy. Thus, their public theology can provide different insights compared to the other two groups, especially on church-state relationships. The major figure studied is Lai Pan-chiu, a professor at the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), who has published a book on public theology³³ and has contributed articles on public theology in the ISCS's journal *Logos and Pneuma*.³⁴ Other theologians such as Xie Zhibin³⁵ and Jason Lam³⁶ will also be considered in this chapter.

The public theologies of evangelical theologians are elaborated in Chapter 4.

Evangelicalism, according to the British historian David Bebbington (b. 1949), is identified with four characteristics: (1) biblicism, which regards the Bible as the source of all spiritual truth; (2) crucicentrism, which highlights Christ's atoning work on the cross; (3) conversionism, which

³³ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*.

³⁴ Lai Pan-chiu, 'Dui hexie shehui yu ke chixu fazhan de gonggong lunshu: Yige hanyu jidujiao shenxue de huiying' [Public Discourses on Harmonious Society and Sustainable Development: A Sino-Christian Theological Response], *Daofeng: Jidujiao wenhua pinglun* [*Logos and Pneuma: Chinese Journal of Theology*] 40 (2014): 107–127.

³⁵ Although Xie is from Mainland China, he has spent several years in Hong Kong completing his doctoral studies at the University of Hong Kong as well as his postdoctoral research at the ISCS. Also, he is one of the editors of the public theology series published by the ISCS. For his writings, see Xie Zhibin, 'Hanyu shenxue yu gonggong kongjian: Shenxue lunti yinjie' [Sino-Christian Theology and Public Space: Introduction of Theological Debate], *Daofeng: Jidujiao wenhua pinglun* [*Logos and Pneuma: Chinese Journal of Theology*] 32 (Spring 2010): 19–26; Xie Zhibin, 'Why Public and Theological? The Problem of Public Theology in the Chinese Context', *International Journal of Public Theology* 11 (2017): 381–404.

³⁶ Jason Lam, 'Cong hanyu shenxue jinnian guanzhu de jixiang yiti jianshi shenxue fansi he shehui fazhan de guanxi' [The Development of Theological Themes in relation to the Changing Chinese Society], in *Zhengzhi yu gonggong: Zhongxi shenxue dui tan* [Political and Public: Western and Chinese Theological Discourse], ed. Michael Welker and Jason Lam (Hong Kong: Logos and Pneuma Press, 2014), 147–176; Jason Lam, 'Hanyu shenxue gongtongti de chansheng yu yanxu' [The Emergence and Continuity of the Community of Sino-Christian Theology], *Daofeng: Jidujiao wenhua pinglun* [*Logos and Pneuma: Chinese Journal of Theology*] 41 (2014): 137–149.

emphasises the necessity for sinners to repent and return to Christ; and (4) activism, which is the active spread of the gospel after one's conversion.³⁷ For Hong Kong evangelicals, the emphasis on this type of activism causes them to be unresponsive to political issues in churches, because they consider their effort to be devoted to the gospel, and not primarily to social activism.

However, since the 2010s, especially after the Umbrella Movement, evangelical theologians have become more involved in social concern and the public engagement of theology, as an attempt to evangelise the unreached through their social participation.³⁸ In this sense, evangelicals in Hong Kong are similar to the 'new evangelicals' in the United States in the late 1950s, who did take one step further than the complete isolation from those who have a more conservative view in terms of theological engagement with society.³⁹ Although there may be evangelicals among the aforementioned two groups, in this chapter I focus on evangelicals who are associated with one of the three denominations which are generally considered to constitute the main evangelical voices of Hong Kong: the Baptist Church of Hong Kong (BCHK), the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA), and the Evangelical Free Church of China (EFCC).⁴⁰ One of the main evangelical theologians I investigate is Kwok Wai-luen, affiliated with the C&MA and previously having taught at its seminary, the Alliance Bible Seminary (ABS). He is currently an associate professor at Hong Kong Baptist University and a prolific theologian on the topic of public engagement with Christianity in Hong Kong. His writings have

³⁷ David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 2–17.

³⁸ It is noteworthy that, unlike the evangelicals in the United States in the 1940s who were involved in the fundamentalist-modernist debate, evangelical theologians in Hong Kong do not heavily engage in such discussions, although most of them are aware of the debate. For details of evangelicalism in the United States, see George M. Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1981), 64.

³⁹ George M. Marsden, *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1987), 75–82.

⁴⁰ Kwok Wai-luen, *Zibao yu guanhuai: Xianggang jiaohui de shehui he zhengzhi canyu* [*Self-Defence or Social Concern? The Social and Political Participation of Hong Kong Church*] (Hong Kong: Chinese Alliance Press, 2014), 10.

explored this topic more readily than the other evangelical theologians listed below. Thus, he is the primary representative to be studied in this thesis.⁴¹ Sam Tsang,⁴² Vincent Chin-pang Lau,⁴³ Freeman Chi-wai Huen,⁴⁴ and Joshua Wai-ying Cho⁴⁵, whose theologies are elaborated in Chapter 5, are all considered evangelicals.

Chapter 5 furthers the conversations in Chapter 4, in terms of the discourse related to the separation of church and state. The aforementioned ‘Hong Kong Hauerwasians’ are the major figures to be examined, because of their specific angle of separation of church and state and hence their association with Hauerwas’s theology. While the three theologians, Freeman Huen, Vincent Lau, and Andres Tang, all of whom teach at the HKBTS, can be considered evangelicals, they tend to be labelled Hauerwasian in their approach to detaching from the world and their understanding of the separation of church and state. Since the emphasis of such detachment is relatively unique in Hong Kong, this chapter studies this phenomenon as to understand how Hong Kong Protestants in general (mis)understand Hauerwas’s theology.

⁴¹ See Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*; Kwok Wai-luen, ‘Reconsidering Public Theology: Involvement of Hong Kong Protestant Christianity in the Occupy Central Movement’, *Journal of Dharma* 40, 2 (April–June 2015): 169–188; Kwok Wai-luen, ‘Cheng chuan yu gengxin—cong Aideli zai Gang de xuesheng shi gong kan chuanjiao shi yu Huaren jiaohui ji qingnian jidutu de hudong’ [Keeping Tradition and Introducing Innovation: David Adeney’s Student Ministry as a Case for Studying the Interaction and Changes of Hong Kong Church and Society], *Jian Dao* 32 (July 2009): 123–152; Kwok Wai-luen, ‘The Hybridization and Localization of the Colony and the Making of Hong Kong Christian Leaders: Three Oral History Accounts’, in *Shaping Christianity in Greater China: Indigenous Christians in Focus*, ed. Paul Woods (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2017), 250–264.

⁴² Sam Tsang, ‘Xinyue de yige gonggong shenxue yiti—yi Make fuyin youguan Jialili hai de gonggong shenxue wei ceshi ge’an’ [Introduction to a Public Theology of the New Testament: Markan Public Theology of the Sea of Galilee as a Test Case], *Shandao qikan [Hill Road]* 31 (July 2013): 85–117.

⁴³ Vincent Lau, ‘From Periphery to Partnership: A Critical Analysis of the Relationship of Baptists in Hong Kong with the Colonial Government in the Post-World War II Era’, PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2005; Vincent Lau, ‘Chutan Youda de Yelimi moshi—sikao qi lunli xue de yiyi ji qi “gonggong” xingzhi’ [A Preliminary Study of the Jeremican Model of John Howard Yoder—Examining Its Ethical Meanings and ‘Public’ Nature of His Theology], *Shandao qikan [Hill Road]* 31 (July 2013): 137–171.

⁴⁴ Freeman Huen, *Shehui- lunli: Du xie Houhuoshi* [Title in English on colophon: *Writing with Hauerwas: Essays on Social Ethic*] (Hong Kong: Logos, 2017); Huen, ‘Gonggong shenxue/ shui de “gonggong”’, 31–63.

⁴⁵ Joshua Cho, *Renxing yu dexing—you chongxian zhenrenxing dao zhongxun dexing lunli [Human Nature and Virtue: From Revealing True Human Nature to Seeking the Ethics of Virtue]* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004); Joshua Cho, *Xushi yu lunli—hou ziyou xushi shenshe shangxi [Narrative and Ethics: Interpreting Postliberal Narrative Theology]* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary, 2005).

After navigating the ‘Hauerwas’s theology’ developed by Hong Kongese, Chapter 6 turns to Hauerwas’s own response to the Asian Christian context and especially to post–Umbrella Movement Hong Kong. This chapter highlights his notions of nonviolence and peaceableness, as well as their application to Hong Kong society. Although he only commented on the Umbrella Movement, the chapter also briefly discusses the implications of his theology for the recent anti-extradition law protests.

While outlining what has been examined in this thesis, the Conclusion overviews the areas that can be elaborated in future research; namely, how Hauerwas’s theology has helped to develop a Hong Kong public theology and the areas which can be further investigated based on this kind of Hong Kong public theology.

Primary Methodology

My interpretive strategy is grounded in theology and aims to use Hauerwas’s social ethics to develop the public theologies in Hong Kong based on the three groups of scholars: Anglican theologians, scholars in Sino-Christian theology, and evangelical theologians. The sources used in this research include books, journal articles, newspaper articles, blogs, and interviews.

The Publicness of Churches in Hong Kong

Broadly speaking, the term ‘public theology’ is known to be problematic, especially with regard to the word ‘public’. Theologians often employ the term ‘public sphere’, introduced by the sociologist Jürgen Habermas (b. 1929) in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, in which he defines the public as the ‘field between state and society’.⁴⁶ Despite also

⁴⁶ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1991), 141.

using the term ‘public sphere’, Stackhouse, one of the pioneers of public theology, recognises the term’s problems because the nature of the sphere depends on the dynamics of society and the religious situation therein, and can vary from time to time.⁴⁷ For some opponents of this term, such as Philip Huang, the public sphere was a concept developed by means of Habermas’s perception of bourgeois society, which only allows for the exchange of ideas among male intellectuals.⁴⁸ Chinese theologians such as Lai Pan-chiu prefer using the term ‘public square’, first proposed by Richard J. Neuhaus (1936–2009).⁴⁹ For Lai, this term portrays an open yet free atmosphere.⁵⁰ At the same time, scholars such as Alexander Chow argue that Neuhaus’s use of ‘public square’ is still very historically embedded because it reflects a democratic ideology that is not necessarily apparent in the Chinese context.⁵¹ Thus, Chow and Merle Goldman (b. 1931), an American historian of modern China teaching at Boston University, use the term ‘public space’ to denote the middle space between the state and the family in modern China.⁵² However, the term is not as neutral as Chow and Goldman claim it to be. As Setha Low and Neil Smith suggest in *The Imperative of Public Space*, the term ‘public space’ is a product of twentieth-century American liberalism concerning the opposition of private and public space.⁵³ Moreover, ‘public space’ seems to be a term distinguished from the public sphere—denoting ‘the range of

⁴⁷ Max L. Stackhouse, ‘Public Theology and Political Economy in a Globalizing Era’, in *Public Theology for the 21st Century*, ed. William Storrar and Andrew Morton (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 182.

⁴⁸ For detailed discussions, see Philip C. C. Huang, “‘Public Sphere’/ ‘Civil Society’ in China?: The Third Realm between State and Society”, *Modern China* 19, 2 (April 1993): 216–240; Sebastian C. H. Kim, *Theology in the Public Sphere* (London: SCM Press, 2011), 10–11.

⁴⁹ Richard John Neuhaus, *The Naked Public Square: Religion and Democracy in America* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1984).

⁵⁰ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 7–8.

⁵¹ Alexander Chow, *Chinese Public Theology: Generational Shifts and Confucian Imagination in Chinese Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 4–5.

⁵² Note that Xie Zhibin also uses the term ‘public space’ (*gonggong kongjian*) in his article ‘Sino-Christian Theology and Public Space: Introduction of Theological Debate’; however, he has not elaborated on his choice of words. For details, see Xie, ‘Hanyu shenxue yu gonggong kongjian’, 19–26; Merle Goldman, *From Comrade to Citizen: The Struggle for Political Rights in China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 16–17; Chow, *Chinese Public Theology*, 6–7.

⁵³ Setha M. Low and Neil Smith, *The Politics of Public Space* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 3–4.

social locations offered by the street, the park, the media, the Internet, the shopping mall, the United Nations, national governments, and local neighborhoods’—which does not necessarily consist of dialogue.⁵⁴ Nonetheless, for the purposes of this thesis, I still use the term ‘public sphere’ when discussing the public.

Since the interpretation of the terms ‘church’ and ‘state’ affects the discussions of public theology, especially in the Hong Kong context, it is noteworthy that the public theology in this thesis mainly refers to Protestant theology, although some of the scholars discussed here developed their theologies by drawing from Catholic scholarship. Hence, although the term ‘church’ usually includes both the Catholic and Protestant churches, this research mainly concerns the latter. As will be discussed in Chapter 1, the shifting notion of the role of ‘state’ also problematises the understanding of the church-state relationship. For ‘state’, I follow the definition of German sociologist Max Weber (1864–1920), who deemed it to be a ‘set of institutions that possess a monopoly on rule-making and the legitimate use of force within a bounded territory’.⁵⁵ This thesis focuses on public theology in post-1997 Hong Kong, referring to the period after which Hong Kong returned to China and became an SAR, ending the era of British colonial rule. Thus, ‘state’ can variably refer to both the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) and the PRC, whereas it referred only to the colonial government before 1997. This sets the backdrop of the three publics identified in David Tracy’s model—society, academia, and church—which I employ to develop Hong Kong public theology.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Low and Smith, *The Politics of Public Space*, 3.

⁵⁵ Craig Calhoun (ed.), ‘State’, in *Dictionary of the Social Sciences* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁵⁶ David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (London: SCM Press, 1981), 3–46

The Three Publics in Public Theology

In a number of studies about public theology, two publics—academia and church—are widely accepted. For example, Gavin D’Costa (b. 1958), Professor of Catholic Theology at the University of Bristol, has written a book about the theological interaction between the university and the church, and how the former can provide intellectual output to the nation, from the standpoint of Roman Catholics in the United States and England.⁵⁷ Duncan B. Forrester, the founder of the Centre for Theology and Public Issues at the University of Edinburgh, has argued that public theology always has to do with one’s context, specifically public issues, but it should not lose the elements of being evangelical (that is, proclaiming the gospel) and confessional in its theology.⁵⁸

David Tracy was one of the first persons to systematically articulate three publics: society, academy, and church.⁵⁹ For the first public, society, Tracy categorises the following three realms: (1) the technoeconomic realm, (2) the realm of polity, and (3) the realm of culture.⁶⁰ The technoeconomic realm stands for the organisation and allocation of goods and services. Through the use of modern technology, the services provided by this realm can fulfil their instrumental end.⁶¹ The second realm, polity, refers to the legitimate meanings of social justice and the use of power. It deals with the legitimate use of force that may, ideally, embody the ideas of social justice.⁶² The third realm, culture, concerns various forms of symbolic expression, including art

⁵⁷ Note that D’Costa, unlike Tracy, does not use the term ‘the publics’ in his monograph. He does describe the relationship between the church, the university, and the public square as a triangular one. For details, see Gavin D’Costa, *Theology in the Public Square: Church, Academy, and Nation* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 1–6.

⁵⁸ Forrester, ‘The Scope of Public Theology’, 5–19.

⁵⁹ Eneida Jacobsen, a Brazilian public theologian at Villanova University, considers it a type of public theology constructed through the mode of the audience. See Eneida Jacobsen, ‘Models of Public Theology’, *International Journal of Public Theology* 6, 1 (2012): 7–22.

⁶⁰ Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 6.

⁶¹ Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 7.

⁶² Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 7.

and religion. Here, Tracy employs Clifford Geertz's definition of culture: 'a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitude toward life.'⁶³

The second public, the academy,⁶⁴ considers theology an academic discipline which involves the public. For Tracy, '[the] "public" of the modern academy for theology serves to render explicit, and thereby to clarify, that traditional drive with new disciplinary resources.... Theology aids the public value of both academy and society when it remains faithful to its internal demand—publicness.'⁶⁵

For Tracy, church, as the third public, is a "reference group" or "generalized other" (in present terms, one "public") to which theological discourse is addressed.... [It] may be considered a "community of moral and religious discourse" which the theologian addresses.'⁶⁶ In Tracy's understanding of the relationship between the church and the world, 'the church acts as prophetic critic of society or as transformative sacrament of the "world".'⁶⁷ Despite having a slightly more positive view of society than Hauerwas, in that he believes it directly influences and even determines the church,⁶⁸ Tracy navigates the question of how the church positions itself in relation to the world. This is perhaps also the question evangelical theologians, the third group examined in this thesis, have been struggling within the recent climate in Hong Kong.

⁶³ Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 7; Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 89.

⁶⁴ Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 14.

⁶⁵ Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 20–21.

⁶⁶ Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 21.

⁶⁷ Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 24–25.

⁶⁸ Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 24.

The Three Publics in Hong Kong Protestant Christianity

The first public, society, is the major focus for Anglican theologians in Hong Kong, who have a long history of penetrating this public since the colonial period. Known to have a close relationship with the government, this group, in contrast to the evangelical theologians, holds a weak view regarding the separation of church and state. For example, Ronald O. Hall (1895–1975), the longest-serving bishop in Hong Kong (1932–1966), insisted on maintaining a relationship with the Chinese government in the midst of the political turbulence of the 1950s.⁶⁹ Writing the foreword of Hall's biography, Paul Kwong expresses appreciation for Hall's continual communication with the Communist Party of China (CPC) and comments that Hall's life shows 'the importance of the church's involvement in society for all people'.⁷⁰ The collaboration of Anglican theologians with the state leads them to organise and allocate goods and services in society; these services can be categorised as the first realm of this public, the technoeconomic realm. Although Tracy did not clearly define the word 'technology', technology and its usage should have been evolving since he published *The Analogical Imagination* in 1981. Hence, the services provided by the HKSKH incidentally employed modern technology, but the technological usage is not intentional, nor is it directly caused by instrumental rationality, which Tracy claims as the major goal of modern technology.⁷¹ Nevertheless, since the HKSKH is one of the major providers of social and education services, their presence and service provision in this realm advances public discourses theologically, despite being negatively perceived by the second and third groups because of their close relationship with the government. Further, because of their collaboration with the Hong Kong government, they squarely fit in the realm of

⁶⁹ For details, see Moira M.W. Chan-Yeung, *The Practical Prophet: Bishop Ronald O. Hall of Hong Kong and His Legacies* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2015), 134–142.

⁷⁰ Chan-Yeung, *The Practical Prophet*, xiv.

⁷¹ Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 8–9.

the polity, provoking interesting conversations regarding social justice and the use of power. Their engagement with the third realm, culture, is not highly observable, although their use of symbols and icons in Sunday Service is evident. As we will elaborate in Chapter 2, while the focus of Anglicans is on the public of society, it is chiefly with regards to the realm of the polity.

The second public, the academy, is most prominently represented by scholars in Sino-Christian theology, who position themselves differently with regards to the relationship between church and state. Because most theologians in this group are not closely affiliated with any specific denomination, their analysis of public theology is based on their role as academics. Urging others to understand theology through the lens of the humanities, scholars in Sino-Christian theology seek to construct a type of public theology that can engage the public with both society and academia. Jason Lam employs Tracy's model of the 'three kinds of publicness' to illustrate the role of academia in the public sphere.⁷² Lai Pan-chiu, meanwhile, attempts to advance the multi-religious dialogue in the public sphere of Hong Kong.⁷³ However, neither of them clearly defines the church's position in these conversations.⁷⁴

Evangelical theologians in Hong Kong have historically tended to detach themselves from the public and to consider their primary responsibility as preaching the gospel, due to their belief in the separation of Christianity and politics, due to their misunderstanding of the term 'separation of church and state' (*zhengjiao fenli*), in the Chinese language.⁷⁵ Scholars such as

⁷² For Lam's discussion, see Lam, 'The Development of Theological Themes', 159–160; for Tracy's theory, see Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 3–46.

⁷³ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 311–346.

⁷⁴ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 263–309.

⁷⁵ The misunderstanding is because that, in the Chinese language, *zheng* and *jiao* can mean Christianity and politics, on top of the usual perception of church and state in the West. For detailed discussions of such separatism, see the discussions in Chapter 4; Kwok, 'Reconsidering Public Theology', 176–180; Kung Lap-yan, 'In Search of True-ness, Dialogue between Political Localism and Theological Ecumenism in Post-Umbrella Movement', *International Journal of Public Theology* 11 (2017): 446.

Freeman Huen regard the public sphere as a Western construction⁷⁶ and may sometimes reject ideas of the church's publicness in society. Hence, this thesis engages in this debate regarding the public of the church and examines whether Hauerwas's theology may complement the current discussions among evangelicals, especially as seen through Kwok Wai-luen,⁷⁷ who observes that the main arguments among evangelicals were merely for or against social participation in civil society in the mid 2010s.⁷⁸

The Influence of Public Theologies from the Global North and Their Application to Hong Kong

Following an examination of the public role of churches and church-state relations in Hong Kong, this thesis highlights how public theologians in Hong Kong, having lived in a former British colony, have adapted Western public theologies and applied them to their context.

The theology of Anglican scholars in Hong Kong has largely been shaped by that in the United Kingdom and, as such, the public theology of these Hong Kong Anglicans often follows the Western practices.⁷⁹ Although these scholars highlight the importance of serving the poor and enhancing education,⁸⁰ they consider social service a way to contribute to social justice.⁸¹ Since this thesis aims to have offered a general picture of Hong Kong public theology, it is necessarily selective in the figure engaged. Hence, the thesis has chosen Anglican voices as opposed to other

⁷⁶ Huen, 'Gonggong shenxue/ shui de "gonggong"?' , 31–63.

⁷⁷ Kwok, 'Reconsidering Public Theology', 176–180.

⁷⁸ It is noteworthy that the denominations many Hong Kong evangelicals affiliated with, such as the C&MA, the BCHK, and the EFCC, are heavily involved in social services, through which they are contributing to civil society. It is debatable, however, whether taking part in social services can be read as the church being involved with the public because civil society is usually considered as part of the public sphere. For discussion of the public sphere and civil society, see Kim, *Theology in the Public Sphere*, 12–14.

⁷⁹ For example, Paul Kwong has been strongly influenced by the practice of Anglican missionary agencies, who presumed the engagement with civil society from the church's side should start from social service and education. For details, see Kwong, *Identity in Community*, 91–96.

⁸⁰ Philip L. Wickeri and Chen Ruiwen, 'Contextualization and the Chinese Anglican Parish: A Case Study of St. Mary's Church, Hong Kong (1912–41)', in *Christian Encounters with Chinese Culture: Essays on Anglican and Episcopal History in China*, ed. Philip L. Wickeri (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2015), 148–150.

⁸¹ Chan-Yeung, *The Practical Prophet*, 200–202.

ecumenical theologians who have engaged the public of the society such as the Lutheran scholar Kung Lap-yan and the Methodist pastor Yuen Tin-yau. This chapter draws out the important and long-standing contribution of the HKSKH, especially in its social and education services. Moreover, it should be noted that this thesis does not intend to be comprehensive; instead, its main aim is to show the diverse engagement of theologians from different publics. In this regard, it is worthwhile to investigate the HKSKH's public theology in postcolonial Hong Kong, particularly in light of the Umbrella Movement in 2014, to show the diversity of theological voices in the public.

Since Sino-Christian theology mainly concerns its self-construction based on the Chinese language while heavily employing Chinese and Western philosophy, the contextualisation of public theology in the Chinese language is of great importance to scholars in this area. The term 'public' is understood differently in the Chinese language—its original meaning, derived from the category of public affairs, refers to the governmental sphere, such as 'the court, the government, the ruler'.⁸² These theologians redefine public theology accordingly in order to make it fit into the Chinese context.⁸³ Public theological interpretations by Sino-Christian scholars may shed light on our perception of public theology in Hong Kong and elsewhere, and especially highlighting contextualisation mindful of Hong Kong's religious and political environment.

For Hong Kong evangelicals, a theological influence from the Global North is evident, although this influence is relatively more diverse than that in the other two groups. Baptist theologians such as Lau, Huen, and Cho tend to use Hauerwas's and Yoder's theories to develop

⁸² Xie, 'Why Public and Theological?' 382–387.

⁸³ In light of contextualisation, Lai highlighted the dominant role of Confucian values in the public discourse of Sino-Christian theology. For further discussions, see Lai, 'Dui hexie shehui yu ke chixu fazhan de gonggong lunshu', 109–112.

their view of church-state relations,⁸⁴ whereas Kwok Wai-luen has drawn from the ideas of Miroslav Volf (b. 1956)⁸⁵ and Oliver O'Donovan (b. 1945)⁸⁶ to complement the current dialogue surrounding public theology. As briefly discussed, Kung has also referenced Hauerwas in his writings on public theology. However, if we were to place him into one of the three groups, he seems to have the characteristics of a Sino-Christian theologian, as he develops his public theology within the academy, as opposed to the public of the church. Nonetheless, Kung's public theology is discussed in part in Chapters 4 and 5, especially his theological response to evangelicals and Hong Kong Hauerwasians. Based on the diverse influences from the Global North, I also conduct a comparative analysis between the public theologies of Hong Kong evangelicals and that of Hauerwas, to illustrate why and how the latter may complement the Hong Kong evangelicals' dialogue on public theology in Hong Kong.

The Contribution of Hauerwas's Social Ethics to Public Theology in Hong Kong

Although the Anabaptist-informed perspective of Hauerwas is developed from his North American context, his viewpoint is not necessarily limited to his own context because he believes that there is no one moral system, but many.⁸⁷ Opposing a universal moral system that would fit every context, he indicates that Christian ethics should be based on the narrative of the Christian community: 'The narrative character of our knowledge of God, the self, and the world is a reality-making claim that the world and our existence in it are God's creations; our lives, and

⁸⁴ Lau, 'From Periphery to Partnership'; Huen, *Shehui- lunli*; Cho, *Xushi yu lunli*.

⁸⁵ For example, Kwok quoted Volf's argument to illustrate that it would be difficult for religious believers to be value free on political issues, in light of the quarrel among Hong Kong church leaders after the Umbrella Movement. See Kwok, 'Reconsidering Public Theology', 188.

⁸⁶ Regarding O'Donovan's theory, Kwok criticised the apparently harmonious society in Hong Kong, which has uplifted liberalism and has not realised that selfishness as human nature may disrupt such harmony. See Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 191.

⁸⁷ Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, 19.

indeed, the existence of the universe are but contingent realities'.⁸⁸ Hence, I should clarify that in this research, I do not intend to build a universal view of public theology that works for every context, but instead to focus on the Hong Kong context and highlight how the Christian narrative can contribute to the dialogue of public theology among evangelicals.

In this way, readers may notice the tensions between universality and particularity in public theology, and Tracy's preference on the former. As Kristin E. Heyer of Boston College indicates, 'Tracy does not conceive of the Christian narrative as autonomous or isolated from other forms of language',⁸⁹ unlike Hauerwas, who perceives Christian narrative to be authentic in an extent that let the world distinguish its difference from the church. While some may consider the discrepancy between the theory of Tracy and that of Hauerwas, similar to Heyer's analysis of Tracy vis-à-vis Lindbeck, I regard it as how Hauerwas's theology may complement on Tracy's notions of three publics.

This research also investigates Hauerwas's Christological approach and his ecclesiological concept of the church as Jesus's witnesses, which will be discussed in Chapter 6. Here I highlight Hauerwas's discourse that Jesus's social ethics are not interim ethics, which are only applied for a short while before Jesus's second coming, but have public relevance for churches that extend the Christian presence on earth. Hauerwas's approach may enrich the discussions of public theology among Hong Kong evangelicals, who are usually thought to be detached from the public.

Although Hauerwas agrees that the state is not a perfect political entity, his approach is relatively diverse with regard to the relationship between church and state, both in the Global

⁸⁸ Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, 25.

⁸⁹ Kristin E. Heyer, 'How Does Theology Go Public? Rethinking the Debate between David Tracy and George Lindbeck', *Political Theology* 5, 3 (2004): 325.

North and among those who are influenced by Anabaptist-informed theology in the Global South. For Hauerwas, the Christian community should bear witness to God's kingdom⁹⁰ and not totally separate itself from society. This differs from the common accusation that Anabaptist scholars usually support the church's detachment from the broader culture.⁹¹ For evangelical theologians in Hong Kong, the common perspective is that the church should not engage in public matters, echoing the approach of some sixteenth-century radical reformers.⁹² Examining their writings and sermons, however, shows that most Hong Kong evangelical theologians illustrate the significance of Jesus's teachings in the context of the social and historical contexts of the first century CE.⁹³ Therefore, in Chapter 6, I investigate how Hauerwas's theories as well as his understanding of Jesus's teaching and the way that Jesus relates to the public can shed light on public theology in Hong Kong.

While I discuss the conversation on the religious transition of Hong Kong since it became an SAR in 1997, I also investigate the impact of the Umbrella Movement on public theology and how it led to the flourishing of literature in this new area. Thus, this research covers how the 2014 event affects Hong Kong church dynamics and how it has stimulated various dialogues among Hong Kong theologians, especially the three groups identified in this thesis. Because the

⁹⁰ 'The kingdom of God' often has two meanings: (1) the kingdom that will fulfil God's promise on the earth after Jesus's second coming and (2) the kingdom of God that is already among Jesus's followers. For discussions of the term 'God's kingdom', see George Eldon Ladd, *The Presence of the Future* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1974), 23–42.

⁹¹ Anabaptist theologians, in both the Global North and South, were accused of holding the view of 'Christ against culture', and some scholars, such as James Gustafson, Hauerwas's PhD supervisor at Yale University, labelled Hauerwas's Anabaptist approach as sectarianism. For details about the theory of 'Christ against culture', see H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper, 1951), 45–82; For Gustafson's argument, see James Gustafson, 'The Sectarian Temptation: Reflections on Theology, the Church, and the University', *Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society* 40 (1985): 83–94.

⁹² For a brief discussion of Anabaptist theology in the sixteenth century, see J. Denny Weaver, *Anabaptist Theology in Face of Postmodernity: A Proposal for the Third Millennium* (Telford, PA: Pandora Press, 2000), 110–116.

⁹³ For example, Sam Tsang argued in his article that Jesus's presence in the Sea of Galilee (Mark 6:45–53) is carefully chosen to illustrate how he connected with the public. For details, see Tsang, 'Xinyue de yige gonggong shenxue yiti', 91–97.

anti-extradition law protests are still ongoing at the time of this writing, this research only engages part of the dialogues. Furthermore, some figures such as the Methodist historian Ying Fuk-tsang and Catholic Cardinal Joseph Zen were also active in both the Umbrella Movement and the anti-extradition law protests; however, since the former's emphasis is much more informed by historical studies as opposed to theology or ethics, while the latter offers a Catholic perspective, they are not discussed in detail in this thesis.

The Significance of the Research

One of the major contributions of this study is that it opens up a dialogue about public theology in post-1997 Hong Kong. Despite the growing interest in public theology among Hong Kong Protestant scholars and lay persons, there is no mutual consent on how theologians and Christian communities should interact with the public, and neither does any study outline the development of Hong Kong public theology and its effect on different groups among the public. Therefore, I investigate this topic in light of Hauerwas's theology and compare it with dominant existing public theologies in the Hong Kong context.

Secondly, this research investigates public theologies in the Global South, ascertaining how Protestant scholars from the Global South can learn from the North and perhaps vice versa. Due to the globalising nature of information technology, Christian communities and their theologies are more connected than ever before. Moreover, since public theologians in the Global North narrate their perspectives according to their own contexts and do not refer to the sociopolitical situations in the Global South, a contextual public theology of Hong Kong is worth developing. For example, Hauerwas constructs his theology based on civil religious society,⁹⁴

⁹⁴ For the discussion of American civil religion, see Stanley Hauerwas, *War and the American Difference: Theological Reflections on Violence and National Identity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2011), 3–12.

which Hong Kong has never experienced. Thus, I use Hong Kong as a case study to expand his theology through such a lens while examining the public theologies among other Hong Kong scholars from different denominational traditions. In this regard, my examination of the church-state relations between 1949 and 1997 helps to understand how Hong Kong is a unique context and how that leads to the idiosyncrasies of its current discourses in public theology.

CHAPTER 1

The Historical Background of Hong Kong Public Theology (1949–1997)

The British brought many things to the colony of Hong Kong. One was Christianity; another was a close church-state relationship.

–Kwok Nai-wang⁹⁵

To understand public theology in the post-1997 era, and why and how those theological discussions matter to Hong Kong Christians, one must understand how their worldview and the environment responsible for it are shaped by past events, such as the formation of civil society, and the beginning of the church-state relationship. This chapter focuses on how the historical context that brought forth the formation of a civil society and affected the relationship between church and state in the postcolonial era, thereby affecting the three groups of theologians discussed in Chapters 2 to 4.

The scope of this chapter will be from 1949 to 1997, divided into two periods. From the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949 until 1982, China implemented religious policies that restricted the practice and spread of Christianity. Foreign missionaries were expelled from the mainland and many relocated to Hong Kong. The rising communist revolution also led to an influx of Mainland Chinese refugees in Hong Kong, both Christian and non-Christian, that indirectly shaped the social policies in Hong Kong as well as church ministries. Therefore, analysing this period helps us to understand how Christianity has been

⁹⁵ Kwok Nai-wang, 1997: *Hong Kong's Struggle for Selfhood* (Hong Kong: Daga Press, 1996), 94.

dominant in terms of the medical, educational, and social services that laid down the foundations for the interaction between the church itself and its involvement in civil society. The second period is from 1982—when the first negotiations began between Deng Xiaoping (1904–1997) and Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013) regarding the return of Hong Kong to China began and *Document 19* introduced post-Cultural Revolution China’s first religious regulations⁹⁶—to 1997, the year Hong Kong became a Special Administrative Region (SAR) under the PRC. For Hong Kong historians, this is usually considered the transition period of Hong Kong, when Hong Kongese began to prepare themselves ideologically and politically for the postcolonial era. This section will highlight not only the Protestant response to the return to China, but also the development of Hong Kong identity during this period, which is a significant topic when discussing Hong Kong public theology. As this thesis focuses on the development of Protestant public theology, the history narrated in this chapter will also lean in this direction, although the implementation of social policies on educational, medical, and social services affected the Catholic churches equally.

1949–1982

During the late 1940s, both Mainland China and Hong Kong were profoundly affected by World War II. According to Steve Yui-sang Tsang (b. 1959), a Hong Kong historian and Director of the SOAS China Institute,⁹⁷ British officials strategically kept Hong Kong as a site

⁹⁶ ‘Document no. 19: The Basic Viewpoint and Policy on the Religious Question During Our Country’s Socialist Period’, translated in Donald E. MacInnis, *Religion in China Today: Policy and Practice* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989), 8–26.

⁹⁷ ‘Professor Steve Tsang’, SOAS, accessed 12 December 2019, <https://www.soas.ac.uk/staff/staff116493.php>.

that may help British ‘prestige and future relations with China’.⁹⁸ Hence, cooperating with churches became a strategy to separate the colonial government from the penetration of the Communist Party of China (CPC), not only hindering the latter’s political influence but also preventing the spread of atheist ideology through schools.⁹⁹

As a result, 1949, the year the PRC was established, became a turning point for most missionary societies in South China. Due to the change of religious policies imposed on Christian organisations, as missionary societies were seen as ‘imposing Western values and ideas upon Chinese civilization’,¹⁰⁰ not only were evangelism and pastoring churches forbidden, but missionaries were forced to leave Mainland China.¹⁰¹ As a result, most moved their missionary hubs to Hong Kong, originally as resorts, which later became permanent sites for them to spread the gospel in China. At the same time as missionaries were relocating to Hong Kong, a large influx of refugees from South China also arrived between 1949 and 1966, which increased the population by around half a million based on migration alone, not to mention the growth due to natural birth from this population.¹⁰² Therefore, it was almost impossible for the colonial government to handle this number of immigrants, on top of repairing the infrastructure of society after the Second Sino-Japanese War. To reduce its workload, in terms of educational, medical, and social services, the colonial government sub-contracted these services to Christian

⁹⁸ HS1/171, Britmis Chungking to War Office, 200900H, 20 July 1945; Steve Tsang, *A Modern History of Hong Kong* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2004), 132.

⁹⁹ Beatrice Leung and Chan Shun-hing, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong, 1950–2000* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 26.

¹⁰⁰ Philip L. Wickeri, *Seeking the Common Ground: Protestant Christianity, the Three-Self Movement, and China’s United Front* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988), 33.

¹⁰¹ Ying Fuk-tsang and Lai Pan-chiu, ‘Diasporic Chinese Communities and Protestantism in Hong Kong During the 1950s’, *Studies in World Christianity* 10, 1 (2004): 142.

¹⁰² For details, see Calida Chu, ‘William Newbern and Youth Hymns: The Music Ministry of the C&MA in South China in the Mid-Twentieth Century’, *International Bulletin of Mission Research* 43, 3 (2019): 226; Glenn Shive, ‘Refugees and Religion in Hong Kong: 1945–1960’, *International Journal of Asian Christianity* 3 (2020): 107–120; Eppie Yuk-ming Wong, ‘The Social Participation of the Hong Kong Churches, 1966–1997’ (PhD diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2006), 36.

organisations.¹⁰³ As Methodist historian Ying Fuk-tsang indicates, due to the immediate need for those services, Christianity played a crucial role in solving the social crisis; in turn, Hong Kong churches became indigenised as a result of the government funding they received to make them self-sustained.¹⁰⁴ Although the term ‘public theology’ had not been invented in the mid-1960s, it is clear that churches had a sense of public engagement to provide for the basic needs of the refugees. This kind of approach was later affirmed by the first two Anglican Archbishops of Hong Kong, Peter Kwong and Paul Kwong, which will be elaborated on in Chapter 2.

According to Loren E. Noren, a Baptist missionary stationed in Hong Kong, the eight major denominations in the 1960s were Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui (the Hong Kong Anglican Church, abbreviated to HKSKH), the Hong Kong Council Church of Christ in China (HKCCCC), the Baptist Convention of Hong Kong (BCHK), the Lutheran Evangelical Church, the Methodist churches, the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, the Tsung Tsin Mission, and the Chinese Rhenish Church.¹⁰⁵ To highlight the denominations that will be investigated in the next few chapters, the HKSKH was led by the Church Missionary Society and operated as the Diocese of Victoria (1849–1951) and the Diocese of Hong Kong and Macau (1951–1997), and the BCHK operated under the Baptist Mission of Hong Kong, before its financial independence from the Southern Baptist Convention that led to its establishment in 1973.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰³ Wong Man-kong, ‘The China Factor and Protestant Christianity in Hong Kong: Reflections from Historical Perspectives’. *Studies in World Christianity* 8, 1 (2002): 126–129.

¹⁰⁴ Ying Fuk-tsang, *Xianggang jidujiao shi yanjiu daolun* [Introduction to Christian Church History of Hong Kong] (Hong Kong: Alliance Bible Seminary, 2004), 174.

¹⁰⁵ Loren E. Noren, *Urban Church Growth in Hong Kong, 1958–1962* (Hong Kong: privately published, 1964), 3; Wong, ‘The Social Participation of the Hong Kong Churches’, 41.

¹⁰⁶ Wong, ‘The Social Participation of the Hong Kong Churches’, 46; Alex Kam-moon To, ‘Lam Chi-Fung’s Transformative Role in Shaping Hong Kong Baptist Life between 1950 and 1970’ (PhD diss., Vrije University, 2018), 22; William H. Brackney, *Congregation and Campus: Baptists in Higher Education* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2008), 449–452.

Hong Kong historians Beatrice Leung and Chan Shun-hing argue that from 1949, the church and the state had a good working relationship, which Leung and Chan called ‘traditional relations’. I prefer to describe this a ‘partnership model’ because it seems problematic to me to label the church’s cooperation with the government as ‘traditional’. Nevertheless, Leung and Chan refer to the fact that the government provided support in terms of land and financial subsidies to churches, while churches provided education and social services to the citizens through these resources.¹⁰⁷ Thus, churches could carry out evangelistic work through those services.¹⁰⁸ Although the instrumental position of the HKSKH will be discussed in the next chapter, it should be noted that Ronald O. Hall (1895–1975), the bishop coordinating the church ministry between 1931 and 1966, successfully maintained a partnership with the government by advancing social and educational services in Hong Kong.¹⁰⁹

The success of this kind of partnership was not without critique. The HKCCCC theologian Kwok Nai-wang explains that ‘the church, government, and powerful businessmen were making use of each other and balancing against each other in such a way that the church lost its position as a critic.’¹¹⁰ This seems to be an unfair judgment against the HKSKH, an Anglican denomination historically known for working with the state or, in David Tracy’s conceptualisation, the public of the society within the realm of the polity. Anglicans tended to believe that testimony could only be illustrated through its interaction with the state.¹¹¹ We may

¹⁰⁷ Leung and Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong*, 23.

¹⁰⁸ Wong, ‘The Social Participation of the Hong Kong Churches’, 10; Ying and Lai, ‘Diasporic Chinese Communities and Protestantism in Hong Kong During the 1950s’, 149–150.

¹⁰⁹ David M. Paton, *R.O.: The Life and Times of Bishop Hall of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: The Diocese of Hong Kong and Macao and the Hong Kong Diocesan Association, 1985).

¹¹⁰ Kwok Nai-wang, ‘Jidujiao zai Xianggang fazhan de jueise he renwu’ [The Role and Mission of Christianity in Hong Kong’s Social Development], in *Xianggang jiaohui yu shehui yundong: Bashì niandai de fensi* [Social Movement and the Christian Church in Hong Kong: Reflections on the 1980s], ed. Chan Shun-hing (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Christian Institute, 1994), 79–80; Leung and Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong*, 44.

¹¹¹ J.W.C. Wand, *Anglicanism in History and Today* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1961), 68.

consider, for instance, K.H. Ting (1915–2012), the founding president of the Chinese Christian Council and preeminent leader of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement in the 1980s and 1990s, who has likewise shown this characteristic in his approach to the atheistic regime of the PRC. As Alexander Chow has rightly argued, the trace of Ting’s active development of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), such as the Amity Foundation, and his political roles in as Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference (1989–2008), is observable among Hong Kong Anglican leaders.¹¹² Despite disagreements by leaders from other denominations, this approach continues in the HKSKH, even in the 2010s.

Since the 1960s, especially after the 1967 riot in Hong Kong,¹¹³ there has been a rising level of social participation among Hong Kong citizens, both Christians and non-Christians. For evangelicals, this was a particularly important shift. According to Kwok Wai-luen, evangelical churches were known for their political apathy; however, their youth—constituting half of the congregational population in the 1970s and 1980s¹¹⁴—decided to become more involved in social participation. This resulted in the establishment of several parachurch organisations, such as the Christian magazine *Breakthrough* (1974), the Hong Kong Fellowship of Evangelical Students (1961),¹¹⁵ and the Hong Kong Industrial Evangelistic Fellowship (1972). Their struggle to counteract the political apathy of evangelical churches can be seen as the beginning of a Hong

¹¹² Alexander Chow, *Chinese Public Theology: Generational Shifts and Confucian Imagination in Chinese Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 62–69.

¹¹³ In short, the 1967 riot was a labour dispute which started at an artificial flower factory owned by the Hong Kong billionaire Li Ka-shing (b. 1928) and turned into a seven-month long demonstration, with 51 deaths and 1172 people injured during the conflict. For details, see Tsang, *A Modern History of Hong Kong*, 183–190.

¹¹⁴ Kwok Wai-luen, *Zibao yu guanhuai: Xianggang jiaohui de shehui he zhengzhi canyu* [Self-Defence or Social Concern? The Social and Political Participation of Hong Kong Church] (Hong Kong: Chinese Alliance Press, 2014), 17.

¹¹⁵ Cheung Wing-shan and Lai Wai-yee, ‘Lishi pian: Yu shidai chujing tong you de FES’ [History: The Journey of FES in Its Era], in *FES wushi zhounian tekan: Sheng bu jin huo zai shao—FES yu xuesheng fuyin yundong (1957–2007) (chuban)* [Special Issue of the 50th Anniversary of FES: Endless Fire Burning—FES and Evangelical Student Movements (1957–2007) (First Edition)], edited by The FES Research and Outreach Department] (Hong Kong: Fellowship of Evangelical Students, 2007), 11–43.

Kong public theology. While trying to clarify their identity as Hong Kongese, these Christians sought to develop a theology that could engage with social issues in light of, but not limited to, the social movements in the 1960s and the Sino-British negotiations between 1982 and 1984.

1982–1997

Although Christianity never became the state religion of the British colony, its influence was strongly felt in the growing civil society. In 1997, Christian organisations ran a significant proportion of schools—378 of the 856 primary schools, (44%) and 309 of the 498 secondary schools (62%)¹¹⁶—and 15 of the 88 hospitals (17%) were managed by Christian organisations.¹¹⁷ As for social services, more than 70 per cent of the centres were run by Christian groups.¹¹⁸ Despite the relatively small Christian population, which was around 9 per cent in 1997, the Christian domination of these services is statistically evident. With these figures, it is understandable that pastoral leaders became worried after the Sino-British negotiations, as the PRC ran these services very differently from the British government.

A Bumpy Path for Churches during the Transition

For Hong Kong churches, the partnership between the colonial government and churches offered stability to their ministry, both financially and operationally. However, the opportunity to

¹¹⁶ For primary schools, Buddhist organisations operated 25, Daoist organisations 16, Confucian organisations 4, and Islamic organisations 1; for secondary schools, Buddhist organisations operated 21, Daoist organisations 8, Confucian organisations 3, and Islamic organisations 1. For details, see Hong Kong Government, *Hong Kong 1997* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Government, 1997), 464; Kwong Chun-wah, *The Public Role of Religion in Post-Colonial Hong Kong: An Historical Overview of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Christianity* (Hong Kong: Peter Lang, 2002), 59.

¹¹⁷ Note that most hospitals in Hong Kong were run by the government, under the Hospital Authority. Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, *Hong Kong Annual Digest of Statistics*, October 1998, 225. See also Kwok Nai-wang, *A Church in Transition* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Christian Institute, 1997), 3–4.

¹¹⁸ Kwong, *The Public Role of Religion in Post-Colonial Hong Kong*, 60.

remain in this comfort zone lasted only until the Sino-British negotiations began in 1982.¹¹⁹ Although the negotiations between the British Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013), and the Chinese Paramount Leader, Deng Xiaoping (1904–1997), came to a conclusion in 1984 with Deng's proposal of 'One Country, Two Systems', for Hong Kong churches, this was merely the beginning of the transitions; they had to navigate how they positioned themselves between the Hong Kong government and the PRC, which was led by the atheist CPC. The two major events outlined in this section will illustrate this: (1) the drafting of the Statement of Faith in 1984, after the confirmation of the Handover, and (2) Protestant leaders visiting Beijing in 1984. These two events set the model for Protestant theologians regarding the church and state relationship and their ways of positioning themselves and constructing their theological voices in the public sphere.

As Leung and Chan state, the confirmation of the 1997 Handover to Mainland China in the 1980s was a critical point for Protestant leaders to enter into negotiations with the Hong Kong colonial government, which Leung and Chan describe as 'non-traditional relations'.¹²⁰ This incident was one of the rare moments when Protestant leaders sat together for a discussion regarding Hong Kong society, as before the 1980s, most of them usually focused on evangelism and developing social services for their own denominations. Due to their concern about religious freedom and their passion for evangelism in Mainland China, a group of Protestant leaders drafted three statements of faith in 1984: the 'Proposed Statement of Faith for Hong Kong Christians in the Face of Social and Political Change', the 'Statement on Religious Freedom by the Protestant Churches of Hong Kong', and the 'Opinions of the Hong Kong Protestant

¹¹⁹ For details of the Sino-British negotiations, see Tsang, *A Modern History of Hong Kong*, 218–225.

¹²⁰ Leung and Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong*, 85.

Delegation to Beijing on the Future of Hong Kong'.¹²¹ Remarkably, the first one—the Statement of Faith, published in May 1984—sold 10,000 copies within three months.¹²² It illustrated the concern of Hong Kongese and hence will be the major focus in this section.

The drafting committee of the Statement of Faith was made up of evangelical leaders from a variety of denominations and NGOs,¹²³ including Jonathan Chao, one of the founders of the China Graduate School of Theology (CGST);¹²⁴ Chin Pak-tau (1944–2010), General Secretary of the Hong Kong Fellowship of Evangelical Students;¹²⁵ Carver Tat-sum Yu, President of the CGST;¹²⁶ Anthony Wing-tai Leung, President of the Christian NGO Breakthrough and the founding headmaster of the tertiary Christian school Lumina College;¹²⁷ and Timothy Siu-hong Lau, Director of the Executive Board of the Chinese Coordination Centre of World Evangelism (CCCOWE) and President of Baptist Convention of Hong Kong (BCHK).¹²⁸ According to Chin Pak-tau, the purpose of the statement was to provide a direction for the church as a living testimony in light of the uncertainty the Handover may bring them, instead of setting up a creed

¹²¹ For the detailed background of the Statement of Faith, see Ying Fuk-tsang, 'Zhengqu zhongjiao ziyou: Xianggang jidujiao shehuixingdong de ge'an yanjiu' [Strive for Religious Freedom: Case Studies of the Social Activism of Hong Kong Protestants], paper presented at *Christianity and Social Activism in Chinese Societies*, Purdue University, Indiana, 24–26 February 2019.

¹²² Wong, 'The China Factor and Protestant Christianity in Hong Kong', 131.

¹²³ 'Lishi bianqian zhong de dingwei—cong "xinnian shu" kan Xianggang jiaohui de shidai chengdan' [Positioning Oneself During the Historical Change—Investigating the Commitment of Hong Kong Churches through 'the Statement of Faith' in this Era], *Shidai luntan* [Christian Times], 8 June 1997, <https://bit.ly/3eT2nQR>.

¹²⁴ Alexander Chow, 'Jonathan Chao and "Return Mission": The Case of the Calvinist Revival in China', *Mission Studies* 36 (2019): 442–57.

¹²⁵ Yan Man-yee, 'Qian FES zongganshi qian beidou zhuhuaianxi' [Former General Secretary of FES, Chin Pak-tau, Returned to the Lord], *Shidai luntan* [Christian Times], 4 January 2010, <https://bit.ly/2XGnvDK>.

¹²⁶ Carver Tat-sum Yu, 'Xiannianshu zhushi' [Notes on the Statement of Faith] (Hong Kong: Fellowship of Evangelical Students, 1984).

¹²⁷ Kwok Man-kwan, 'Jiechu chengjiu dajiang—Liang Yongtai boshi' [Distinguished Reward—Dr Anthony Wing-tai Leung], Graphic Arts Association, 28 December 2018, <https://bit.ly/2OZpVbt>.

¹²⁸ 'Board of Directors', Chinese Coordination Centre of World Evangelism, accessed 16 May 2019, <http://www.cccowe.org/content.php?id=aboutboardofdirectors>.

for Christians to follow.¹²⁹ Thus, the Statement highlights certain points for Christians to explore while reflecting on their roles in Hong Kong society.

The significance of this document is that it raised interest among both churches and Christian NGOs in further developing public discourse relating to the Handover. According to Philemon Yuen-wan Choi (1945–), the founding director of Breakthrough and the contact person for the Statement of Faith, the Statement provided a consensual theological standpoint for church leaders who wished to contribute to the theological reflection of the Handover but could not fully express or discuss their views within the church because the church might perceive them as too political. For these leaders, this Statement was ‘a response and a participation based on the Bible, theology and their Christian conviction’.¹³⁰ The result of issuing this statement was the establishment during the 1980s of several Christian Social Movement Organisations (SMOs) that were dedicated to the Protestant engagement with the public sphere: the Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement (*Xianggang jiaohui gengxin yundong*, 1985)¹³¹ and the Christian Sentinels for Hong Kong (*Jidutu Xianggang shouwang she*, 1985).¹³² The weekly magazine *Christian Times* was also founded in 1987.¹³³

¹²⁹ Chin Pak-tau, ‘Shidai xinnian kaocha: Xianggang jidutu zai xianjin shehui ke zhengzhi bianqian zhong suoqi de xinnian chajing shiwuke’ [Studying the Bible with Faith in the Contemporary Era: 15 Lessons of Bible Study in Faith by Hong Kong Christians in the Contemporary Society and the Shift of Politics] (Hong Kong: Fellowship of Evangelical Students, 1984), 5.

¹³⁰ Choi Yuen-wan, “‘Xinnianshu’ de lailongqumai’ [The Cause and Effect of ‘the Statement of Faith’], *Ganlan [Olive]* 46 (May 1984).

¹³¹ ‘Guanyu women’ [About Us], Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement, accessed 21 May 2019, <https://bit.ly/2Qxbn4o>.

¹³² Law Man-wai, ‘Huigui xilie (2): Qianxian qunti yanyi’ [The Series of the Handover: The Historical Romance of the Communities Upfront], *Shidai luntan [Christian Times]*, 15 June 1997, <https://bit.ly/3bMxEmA>; Law Man-wai, ‘Changhe zhu lang: Lun zheng tuanti de shiwei’ [Long Waves: The Decline of Political Organisations], *Shidai luntan [Christian Times]*, 16 June 2017, <https://bit.ly/2JXQOtC>.

¹³³ ‘Wocheng woxiang: Women de luntan 1987–2017’ [Our City, Our Hometown: Our Forum 1987–2017], *Shidai luntan [Christian Times]*, 1 September 2017, <https://christiantimes.org.hk/Common/Reader/News/ShowNews.jsp?Nid=152467&Pid=103&Version=0&Cid=2196&Charset=big5hkscs>.

Another major incident concerning public theology was several Protestant leaders' visit to Beijing in September 1984. As we will further discuss in Chapter 2, it was an unusual ecumenical activity for Anglicans, ecumenical, and evangelical leaders to work together for the betterment of Hong Kong society. This trip can be seen as a continuation of the dialogue of the Statement of Faith, taking matters one step further to initiate discourse with the PRC. The reason for the Protestant leaders' reaction was their fear that religious freedom would be restrained after the Handover and be downgraded to the same situation as in Mainland China, a possibility referred to as 'today's [Mainland] China; tomorrow's Hong Kong' (*jinri Zhongguo; mingri Xianggang*). As a result, a group of twenty-one leaders from different Protestant denominations in Hong Kong¹³⁴ met with Ren Wuzhi, Director of the China's State Council of State Administration for Religious Affairs,¹³⁵ and Ji Pengfei, Director of the Hong Kong and Macau Office.¹³⁶ This group, led by Peter Kwong (b. 1936), Archbishop of the HKSKH (1998–2006), Kwok Nai-wang, General Secretary of the Hong Kong Christian Council (HKCC), and Lincoln Lam-hoi Leung, President of the HKCC and President of the Hong Kong Methodist Church,¹³⁷ passed the 'Beijing Delegation Statement' prior to their meeting with Ji.

¹³⁴ Note that these leaders were carefully chosen by the Hong Kong branch of the New China News Agency (or Xinhua News Agency), which was renamed as the Liaison Office of the Central People's Government in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in 2000. For details, see Ying, 'Zhengqu zhongjiao ziyou'; Christine Loh, *Dixia zhenxian: Zhonggong zai Xianggang de lishi* [Underground Frontline: The History of the Communist Party of China in Hong Kong] (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011), 232.

¹³⁵ Note that since March 2018, this council has been merged under the United Front Work Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China. See 'Zhonggong zhongyang yinfa shenhua dang he guojia jigou gaige fangan' [The Central Government of the Communist Party of China Published the Reformed Policies to Strengthen the Party and the Country], the People's Republic of China, 21 March 2018, <http://www.gov.cn/zhengce/2018-03/21/content5276191.htm#1>.

¹³⁶ Lam Chak, 'Ji Pengfei tanhua cuoyao' [Abstract of the Conversation with Ji Pengfei], *Xinxi* [Message] (September 1984): 3–4.

¹³⁷ Note that Philip Teng, President of the CGST and President of the C&MA, who was supposed to represent evangelical churches, was absent during the trip, although he was one of the nominated leaders for the trip. See Leung and Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong*, 189; Ying 'Zhengqu zhongjiao ziyou'.

The 'Beijing Delegation Statement' mainly expressed the Protestant leaders' request to maintain religious freedom and the church-government partnership between churches and the colonial government, as they hoped to maintain their social and educational services, which were already well established in Hong Kong.¹³⁸ The positive outcome of this visit was that the Chinese officials promised the 'three mutual principles': (1) no subordination to each other (*hubu lishu*), (2) no intervention with each other (*hubu ganshe*), and (3) mutual respect (*huxiang zunzhong*).¹³⁹ In other words, the Protestant leaders' deepest concern about the Handover, religious freedom, had been addressed. Missionaries could still come to Hong Kong without restriction, and social and educational services run by these Protestant denominations could continue without any changes. According to *Message*, the monthly magazine of the HKCC, 'this is the first interaction between Hong Kong [Protestant] churches and the Chinese government ... as the Sino-British Joint Declaration was announced, Hong Kong will step into a new historical period.... This visit opens the conversation [between Hong Kong Protestant churches and the Chinese government] and is a major achievement even by itself.'¹⁴⁰ In the 2020s, this statement may sound bizarre as the interaction between Protestant churches and the PRC is so frequent nowadays, but looking back to the 1980s, when Protestant leaders struggled to interact with the colonial government, this perspective is more understandable. Against the backdrop of almost complete political apathy within evangelical circles, the shift of social concern among evangelicals in the post-Umbrella Movement era may seem more dramatic.

¹³⁸ As discussed earlier, Protestant churches, in general, have played a crucial role in developing educational and social services since the 1960s, although these denominations' relationship with the government may not be as close as that of the HKSKH. This is what Leung and Chan called 'the contractor model'. For the discussion of this model, see Leung and Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong*, 40–45.

¹³⁹ Lam Chak, 'Zongjiao shiwuju Ren Wuzhi daijuzhang youguan zongjiao wenti de tanhua cuoyao' [The Minutes of the Conversations of Religious Issues with Ren Wuzhi, the Deputy Head of the State Administration for Religious Affairs], *Xinxi [Message]* (September 1984): 5.

¹⁴⁰ Lam Chak, 'Beijing zhi xing: Xianggang jidutu Beijing fangwentuan teji' [The Beijing Trip: Special Report of the Hong Kong Protestant Delegation to Beijing], *Xinxi [Message]* (September 1984): 1–2.

In the midst of these negotiations, scholars in Sino-Christian theology started to produce significant literature in the 1980s which would later be known as Sino-Christian theology.¹⁴¹ Due to the influx of scholars from Mainland China after the Cultural Revolution, Hong Kong became a significant hub for the exploration of Sino-Christian theology. The Institute of Sino-Christian Studies (ISCS) was established in 1993 and eventually registered non-profit with the Hong Kong government in 1995, situated at Tao Fong Shan, Shatin, in the same district of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), and was instrumental in providing an environment for scholars in Sino-Christian theology to exchange dialogue on Chinese Christianity and its interaction with Chinese culture. Its founding academic director was Liu Xiaofeng, a Mainland Chinese pioneer of Sino-Christian theology, who became the editor-in-chief of *Logos and Pneuma: Chinese Journal of Theology* when it resumed publication in 1994.¹⁴² Daniel Yeung (b. 1958), the academic director preceding Lai Pan-chiu, was instrumental in promoting the concept of Sino-Christian theology and connecting different scholars with similar academic interests.¹⁴³ The definition of Sino-Christian theology not bound by a specific geopolitical region as a Chinese theology helped to consolidate the foundation of the ISCS. In some ways, it broadens the discourse of Sino-Christian theology and encourages scholarship not merely from Mainland Chinese scholars, but scholars from any geopolitical region who are genuinely interested in expanding theology in the Chinese language. The role of public theology in Sino-Christian

¹⁴¹ Note that Fredrik Fällman, Senior Lecturer at the University of Gothenburg, used the term ‘Sino-Theology’ instead of ‘Sino-Christian theology’. See Fredrik Fällman, *Salvation and Modernity: Intellectuals and Faith in Contemporary China* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2008).

¹⁴² According to its editorial team, *Logos and Pneuma* was first published in 1934 as a bi-annual journal and was forced to stop publication in 1979 due to sociopolitical turbulence. For the history of *Logos and Pneuma*, see Editorial Team, *Logos and Pneuma*, ‘Fukan ci’ [Republished Foreword], *Daofeng: Jidujiao wenhua pinglun* [*Logos and Pneuma: Chinese Journal of Theology*] 1, 1 (1994): 8–9. For detailed discussions of Liu’s theological approach, see Chow, *Chinese Public Theology*, 72–80; Fällman, *Salvation and Modernity*, 41–49.

¹⁴³ Naomi Thurston, *Studying Christianity in China: Constructions of an Emerging Discourse*. (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 40.

theology will be discussed in Chapter 3; however, it is noteworthy that He Guanghu, another Mainland Chinese pioneer of Sino-Christian theology, argued that Chinese scholars should help Chinese people to develop theological research based on the context of the Chinese people: ‘Since the international academic world has already produced abundant and outstanding works in such areas as religious sociology, public theology, and political theology, it is advisable to translate related books into Chinese to help more Chinese Christianity researchers explore the reality of the Chinese people and probe into those areas.’¹⁴⁴ As Lai Pan-chiu argues, ‘because of the rise in the awareness of the local identity and the social and political issues particular to their respective contexts, the process of [developing] ... contextual theology has been in progress since the 1970s’.¹⁴⁵ This is much more evident in the 1980s when the PRC started negotiating with the United Kingdom for the return of Hong Kong.

The Rise of Hong Kong Identity

Although this section will mainly discuss the political issues of Hong Kong identity, as we will see in the next three chapters, this is interconnected with the construction of Hong Kong public theology. As briefly mentioned in the previous section, the 1967 riot was one of the rare moments where Hong Kong citizens, both Christian and non-Christian, realised the ambiguity of their identity: while they did not consider themselves British, they sensed a difference from the Chinese of the PRC. As Steve Tsang has rightly observed, ‘being Chinese in Hong Kong was primarily an ethnic and cultural affiliation and generally did not mean being a Chinese citizen or

¹⁴⁴ He Guanghu, ‘Three Generations of Chinese Christianity Researchers: From the 1950s to 2007’, in *China and Christianity: A New Phase of Encounter?*, ed. Felix Wilfred, Edmond Tang, and Georg Evers (London: SCM Press, 2008), 69.

¹⁴⁵ Lai Pan-chiu, ‘Chinese Culture and the Development of Sino-Christian Theology’, in *Sino-Christian Studies in China*, ed. Yang Huilin and Daniel H.N. Yeung (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006), 289.

national of the PRC.’¹⁴⁶ This view was further intensified in the 1980s when Hong Kong citizens had to face the reality that one day they would blend into their motherland again. The 1989 incident in Tiananmen consolidated a fear about the return of Hong Kong to the PRC—the threat of authoritarianism leading to the lack of freedom. For Christians, this meant religious freedom, a topic which had deeply troubled them since the Sino-British negotiations. While in the past they had considered Christians in Mainland China to be persecuted, they perhaps could not have imagined that one day they would be the persecuted ones, a social reality they had to face after 1997. Through the growing sense of the otherness of Mainland Chinese, their Hong Kong identity was most likely strengthened by this kind of reflection.

This kind of struggle can also be seen in the Hong Kongese attitude to the Tiananmen Square protests in 1989. In many ways, these reactions may find echos in the anti-extradition law protests that began in 2019. For instance, generous donations were made to the student protesters; the supporters of the movement—including both the students and the financial supporters—were very emotionally involved, which made it difficult for them to see the reality of the situation, and they ‘chose to ignore the dark side or inadequacies of the student movement’.¹⁴⁷ In 2019, even some restaurants strategically pretended that they supported the anti-extradition law protests in order to attract the movement’s supporters as customers.¹⁴⁸ Furthermore, parallels can be found in elections. In the 1991 legislative elections, most pro-PRC candidates were defeated, and those pro-democracy groups, especially the United Democrats founded by pro-student movement leaders Martin Lee and Szeto Wah, won 58 per cent of the seats; in the regional election in 2019, 87 per cent were won by pro-democratic allies in an

¹⁴⁶ Tsang, *A Modern History of Hong Kong*, 195.

¹⁴⁷ Tsang, *A Modern History of Hong Kong*, 246.

¹⁴⁸ Chan Yu-ming, ‘Huang dian de menkan’ [The Bar of Yellow Shops], *Duli meiti [In Media Hong Kong]*, 28 December 2019, <https://www.inmediahk.net/node/1069571>.

election that had the highest number of votes in Hong Kong history, with a 71.2 per cent voting rate among qualified voters.¹⁴⁹ These figures show the determination of the Hong Kong citizens to decide their future for themselves, due to the rise of Hong Kong identity. History seems to repeat itself after thirty years, albeit through a different democratic event.

In light of the anxiety¹⁵⁰ created by the unforeseeable future of Hong Kong, Arnold Muk-kuk Yeung (1945–2002), a theology lecturer at the CUHK, proposed a reconciliation theology in 1987 for the Hong Kongese to reflect on their fear of impending return of Hong Kong to China. Dedicating his monograph to those who are ‘unwilling and unable to leave [Hong Kong] after 1997’,¹⁵¹ Yeung suggested that church leaders should face this struggle together with the congregation. Based on the book of Lamentations, Yeung urges churches to refocus on God to receive healing from several traumas they experienced in the immigration of the 1960s and the political uncertainty of the 1980s.¹⁵² Although some may criticise his disapproval of liberation movements that are ‘[obsessed] with the audience’s claps’, he was one of the first theologians to develop a Hong Kong public theology to respond to the Handover in 1997.¹⁵³ As Kwok Wai-luen added, Yeung’s theological contribution to the Hong Kong situation is that he provided an alternative for the social gospel and an otherworldly gospel—for he argued that Christians should reconcile with God as well as with human beings.¹⁵⁴ While Kwok’s concept of civil

¹⁴⁹ ‘Xianggang qu yihui xuanju minzhu pai dasheng, dan jiangju neng bei dapo ma’ [Can the Victory of Democrats in the Hong Kong Legislative Council Break the Deadlock?], BBC, 25 November 2019, <https://www.bbc.com/zhongwen/trad/chinese-news-50543193>; Keith Bradsher, ‘Hong Kong Election Landslide Signals More Frictions with Beijing’, *The New York Times*, 25 November 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/25/world/asia/hong-kong-election-protests.html>.

¹⁵⁰ Note that Arnold Yeung intends to use the word ‘anxiety’ instead of ‘fear’ because, according to Sigmund Freud, the former responds to an uncertain object, while the latter has a specific matter that causes fear. For details, see Sigmund Freud, ‘On the Grounds for Detaching a Particular Syndrome from Neurasthenia under the Description of “Anxiety Neurosis”’, *SF* 3 (1962): 87–120.

¹⁵¹ Arnold Yeung, *Fu he shenxue yu jiaohui gengxin* [Theology of Reconciliation and Church Renewal] (Hong Kong: Renewal Hong Kong, 2012), i.

¹⁵² Yeung, *Fu he shenxue yu jiaohui gengxin*, 500–531.

¹⁵³ Yeung, *Fu he shenxue yu jiaohui gengxin*, 531.

¹⁵⁴ Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 141–143.

society will be further discussed in Chapter 4, it should be noted that before 1997, there were still some attempts to engage with the civil society theologically, although they were perhaps minimal.

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted a few key events of the Protestant engagement with public theology: the change in religious policy of Mainland China in the 1950s, which compelled the missionaries to stay in Hong Kong for long-term ministries; their social concern through medical, educational, and social services, which led to the foundation of the current church-state relationship; their (re)interpretation of the relationship between church and society, which caused the establishment of several parachurch organisations to assist in this need; their struggle regarding the return of Hong Kong to Mainland China, which risked prohibiting their religious freedom and the operation of medical, educational, and social services; and the reflection of the Hong Kongese identity that is essential in shaping a Hong Kong public theology. Despite the relatively small population of Hong Kong Christians, around 16 per cent in 2019,¹⁵⁵ Christian's public voice has always far stronger than its number has indicated, which is shown through the high percentage of medical, educational, and social services run by Christian organisations. As one may observe, every crisis can be a turning point and an opportunity for those involved to reflect on their situation and rethink their position in the world. Against this backdrop, the next chapter will discuss the Anglican bishop Paul Kwong's theology in order to understand how he

¹⁵⁵ The percentage is calculated based on 1.2 million of Christian population and 7.5 million total population of Hong Kong. See Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China, *Hong Kong Yearbook*, updated on 30 September 2020, <https://www.yearbook.gov.hk/2019/en/>.

navigates the dialogue of Hong Kong identity, considering the close relationship between the HKSKH and the government.

CHAPTER 2

Public Theology in the Anglican Tradition: Archbishop Paul Kwong

For Anglican Christians, church and society can never be separated; they are integral to each other.

–Wendy Dackson, 2012¹⁵⁶

As part of the former British colony, Hong Kong churches enjoyed a close relationship with the colonial government before 1997, especially for those of the Anglican-Episcopal tradition; that is, Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui (HKSKH). However, since the Handover in 1997, when Hong Kong became a special administrative region (SAR) of China, the HKSKH lost this privilege. This chapter seeks to investigate the public theology of Paul Kwong (b. 1950), Archbishop of Hong Kong since 1998, along with the other Anglican theologians in Hong Kong who have been actively working with the state—that is, in the polity realm of the public of the society. This chapter will examine how Anglican public theology may shift, when the HKSKH attempts to maintain a good church-state relationship with the People’s Republic of China (PRC) in addition to the SAR government.

It is evident that Kwong is well-informed on the subject of Anglican social theology, quoting William Temple’s words (1881–1944) in one of his sermons¹⁵⁷ and affirmed Charles

¹⁵⁶ Wendy Dackson, ‘Anglicanism and Social Theology’, *Anglican Theological Review* 94, 4 (Fall 2012): 616.

¹⁵⁷ Paul Kwong, ‘Wei shenme yao xuanjiao’ [Why Do We Need to Do Missionary Work?], *Echo* 2118 (9 October 2016).

Gore's (1853–1932) incarnation theology.¹⁵⁸ However, if one has observed his interaction with the state, the PRC, one may notice his public theology is more inclined to that of K.H. Ting (Ding Guangxun, 1915–2012), the Chinese Anglican bishop who was instrumental in founding the Chinese Christian Council, than to that of the British theologians. Furthermore, as Kwong noted at an Anglican conference in 2012, to understand the history of the HKSKH (or *Xianggang shenggonghui*; the Anglican Church of Hong Kong), the prior knowledge of the history of Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui (*Zhonghua shenggonghui*; abbreviated as CHSKH, the Anglican Church of China) is essential; however, while the latter was shaped by various Anglican and Episcopalian missionaries of British and North American origins, the former was a product of the efforts of the missionaries from the British missionary agency Church Missionary Society (CMS).¹⁵⁹ Building on this argument, this chapter will attempt to demonstrate how the HKSKH, established by the British missionaries, have attempted to maintain its Chineseness, and how this perspective may change the public theologies of the Hong Kong Anglicans. Four major themes of Kwong's public theology will be discussed: (1) postcolonial theology, (2) the identity struggle of Hong Kong citizens, (3) harmony and *via media* in Kwong's public theology, and (4) the ecclesial model of polity compared to the election of the Chief Executive in Hong Kong.

This chapter will draw on primary sources such as *Identity in Community*, Paul Kwong's doctoral dissertation (published in 2011), his articles collected in the HKSKH's own journal *Echo*, his articles in the Anglican seminary in Hong Kong's journal *Minghua*, and his online sermons. Kwong's views will also be put into conversation with other Hong Kong Anglican leaders, to offer a broader understanding of the general understanding of the HKSKH leadership.

¹⁵⁸ Paul Kwong, 'The Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui', in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to the Anglican Communion*, ed. Ian S. Markham et al. (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 259.

¹⁵⁹ 'Learning from the Past, Looking to the Future', *Echo* 284 (August 2012).

Secondary sources will include news articles and online commentaries, mostly published by Protestant organisations and secular news agencies.

The Public for Hong Kong Anglican Theologians: Society

Continuing the discussion on the complexity of the public sphere in public theology in the previous chapters, this section will explore society, the public with which Anglican public theology in Hong Kong primarily engages. Highlighting the political realm of this public, this chapter seeks to argue that the Anglican public theology in Hong Kong is conceived largely in terms of the HKSKH's interaction with the state, which, in turn, shapes the HKSKH's engagement with other publics. While I will develop my argument on the publics that scholars in Sino-Christian theology and evangelical theologians focus on, which are, academia and church, it is worth noting that Anglican public theology may also exist in these publics, but not as active as the other two groups. As briefly mentioned in the introduction chapter, despite the HKSKH's engagement with the public of the society—one of the three publics of David Tracy's categorisation—and with the emphasis on the realm of the polity, I would argue that the HKSKH's engagements in the technoeconomic realm and the cultural realms are minimal. For Tracy, the technoeconomic realm is 'concerned with the organization and allocation of goods and services. [Its] structure forms the occupation and stratification systems of the society and uses modern technology for instrumental ends'.¹⁶⁰ Although there is production of services from the HKSKH, strictly speaking, the social services it provides are not merely through technology, and it is not based on instrumental rationality, which, according to Tracy, is the main goal of

¹⁶⁰ David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (London: SCM Press, 1981), 7.

these services.¹⁶¹ For the realm of culture, since the exchange of theological dialogue through arts is not abundant in Hong Kong, I argue that none of the groups discussed in this thesis—the HKSKH, like the scholars in Sino-Christian theology and evangelical theologians—have contributed much to this realm.

Christian public theology often involves engagement in the civil society.¹⁶² As outlined in Chapter 1, this is historically true of all Protestant churches in Hong Kong. Thus, this chapter will not focus on such similarities but will, instead, aim to elaborate on the distinguishing characteristics of the three publics represented by the three groups of theologians selected for this thesis.

The Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui and its Roots in China¹⁶³

A number of missionary agencies all over the world has contributed to the Anglican-Episcopal ministry in Hong Kong. In the nineteenth century, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel (SPG) from the Church of England (C of E) was one of the first agencies to conduct its missionary work in China in order to spread the gospel to European settlers.¹⁶⁴ The US-based Protestant Episcopal Church Mission (PECM) also put down roots in Shanghai, led by William Jones Boone (1811–64), who was considered its founder. As Shanghai was one of the five treaty

¹⁶¹ For further explanations of instrumental rationality, see Stephen Kalberg, 'Max Weber's Types of Rationality: Cornerstones for the Analysis of Rationalization Processes in History', *The American Journal of Sociology* 85, 5 (March 1980): 1145–79.

¹⁶² Sebastian C.H. Kim, *Theology in the Public Sphere* (London: SCM Press, 2011), 10–14.

¹⁶³ Note that the HKSKH was not established until 1998, as a result of the Handover. For the institutional changes in the Hong Kong Anglican-Episcopal Church, see Philip L. Wickeri, *Christian Encounters with Chinese Culture: Essays on Anglican and Episcopal History in China* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2015), 5–20.

¹⁶⁴ Angela Wai-ching Wong and Patricia P.K. Chiu, *Christian Women in Chinese Society: The Anglican Story* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2018), 3.

ports opened to foreigners following the Treaty of Nanjing in 1842,¹⁶⁵ this location helped the PECM to advance their ministries in this foreign land. Besides the SPG and the PECM, several Church of England missionary agencies were active in China in the nineteenth century, such as the Church Missionary Society (CMS) and the two agencies focused on women, the Church of England Zenana Mission and the Society for Promoting Female Education in the East.¹⁶⁶

Among these missionary agencies, the evangelical-oriented Church Missionary Society (CMS), independent from the high-church-oriented SPG, was more significant in the development of the HKSKH, as most of their missionaries were sent to South China as their first port of call. In contrast, the PECM which tended to stay in the Shanghai area was less influential in Hong Kong than the CMS.¹⁶⁷ The latter started its ministry in Hong Kong as early as the 1840s, when Vincent John Stanton (1817–1891) arrived as the first colonial chaplain.¹⁶⁸ Since then, Hong Kong Anglicans have worked closely with the colonial government to improve education as well as social services in Hong Kong.¹⁶⁹ The colonial government provided the financial and human resources to improve social conditions and, in the mid-twentieth century, saw the church as a partner in preventing the spread of communism, especially during the 1960s with the social turbulence caused by the rise of pro-nationalists and pro-communists.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁵ The other four treaty ports were Guangzhou (Canton), Xiamen (Amoy), Fuzhou (Foochow), and Ningbo. For details, see Daniel H. Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China* (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 48–49.

¹⁶⁶ Philip L. Wickeri, ‘Anglicanism in China and East Asia, 1819–1912’, in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism, Volume III: Partisan Anglicanism and Its Global Expansion 1829–c.1914*, ed. Rowan Strong (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 328.

¹⁶⁷ Wickeri, ‘Anglicanism in China and East Asia, 1819–1912’, 323; Wong and Chiu, *Christian Women in Chinese Society*, 3.

¹⁶⁸ For Stanton’s work, see George B. Endacott and Dorothy E. She, *The Diocese of Victoria, Hong Kong: A Hundred Years of Church History, 1849–1949* (Hong Kong: Kelly and Walsh, 1949), 11–14.

¹⁶⁹ For the details of the HKSKH’s social services, see Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui, *Bubu jidu: Xianggang Shenggonghui de shehuiwu* [Step by Step in Christ: The Social Services of Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui] (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Welfare Council Limited, 2014).

¹⁷⁰ For the details of the Anglican participation in education and social services between 1949 and 1997, see Beatrice Leung and Chan Shun-hing, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong, 1950–2000* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 23–30.

Strictly speaking, the CHSKH, established as a union of Anglican and Episcopalian work in 1912, did not directly link to the Diocese of Victoria, the former Hong Kong jurisdiction.¹⁷¹ Nonetheless, as will be argued in later sections, Paul Kwong's theology underscores a strong connection between Anglicans in Mainland China and in Hong Kong, due to their history of close collaboration.

As rightly indicated by Philip L. Wickeri (b. 1947), Advisor to the Archbishop of Hong Kong on theological and historical studies, 'Anglicanism has no conception of church and state as two rival societies in conflict.'¹⁷² He cites Temple's argument that the Christian participation in politics can only fully manifest through one's national identity and the collaboration between church and nation: '[the] Church must recognize the nation as having a certain function in divine providence with reference to [one's] spiritual life. It must not try to usurp the State's, for if it does it will perform them badly, and it will also—which is far more serious—be deserting the work for which it alone is competent.'¹⁷³ In other words, to nurture one's spiritual life, one has to interact with the state to a certain extent. While many assumed the close relationship between church and state only started after 1997, this concept has been embedded into Anglicanism, and most notably demonstrated Temple.¹⁷⁴ Following this logic, the active collaboration between the HKSKH and the Hong Kong government becomes understandable.

¹⁷¹ Note that the Diocese of South China, under the CHSKH, established its first synod in 1912 and ran until 1951, before it merged with the Diocese of Victoria to become the Diocese of Hong Kong and Macao. Kwong, 'The Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui', 254; Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui, *Bubu jidu*, 2–3.

¹⁷² Philip L. Wickeri, *Seeking the Common Ground: Protestant Christianity, the Three-Self Movement, and China's United Front* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988), 116.

¹⁷³ William Temple, *Church and Nation* (London: Macmillan, 1915), 56–57; See Wickeri, *Seeking the Common Ground*, 116.

¹⁷⁴ For the history of the church and state relationship in the UK, see Dackson, 'Anglicanism and Social Theology'. For the detailed discussions of Temple's public theology, see Wendy Dackson, 'Archbishop William Temple and Public Theology in a Post-Christian Context', *Journal of Anglican Studies* 4, 2 (2006): 239–52.

Since the era of Ronald O. Hall (1895–1975), the first bishop of the Diocese of Hong Kong and Macau,¹⁷⁵ the HKSKH has established a good relationship with the colonial government. He was instrumental in establishing social and education services, including social service centres, theological colleges, and numerous primary and secondary schools under the HKSKH.¹⁷⁶ The Tao Fong Shan Ecumenical Study Centre and Divinity School of Chung Chi College at the Chinese University of Hong Kong, where the scholars in Sino-Christian theologians are now situated at, were the products of Hall's dedication to higher educations among the Chinese people.¹⁷⁷ The path Hall has built for the HKSKH helped smooth its partnership with the Hong Kong colonial government, and thereby assisting later bishops, Peter Kwong (b. 1936), who succeeded Gilbert Baker (1910–1986) to become the Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Hong Kong and Macau in 1980. As the first Chinese bishop of the diocese, he helped in establishing the HKSKH in 1998, after the Handover of Hong Kong to China, as well as extending the collaborating relationship with the PRC, especially with the state-sanctioned Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) and the China Christian Council (CCC). As Wickeri argued, 'the post-denominational CCC was in some sense a successor to the CHSKH and other Chinese

¹⁷⁵ The Diocese of Victoria was renamed as the Diocese of Hong Kong and Macau due to the establishment of the PRC in 1949 and the split from the CKSKH in 1951. For details, see Moira M.W. Chan-Yeung, *The Practical Prophet: Bishop Ronald O. Hall of Hong Kong and His Legacies* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2015), 104–106.

¹⁷⁶ Philip L. Wickeri and Paul Kwong, 'Sheng Kung Hui: The Contextualization of Anglicanism in Hong Kong', in *The Oxford Handbook of Anglican Studies*, ed. Mark Chapman, Sathianathan Clarke, and Martyn Percy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 264; Christian Weekly, 'Shenggonghui Minghua Shensheyuan xuanbu: Xueyuan huo Xianggang ke guoji renke' [Sheng Kung Hui Ming Hua Theological College Announces: Degrees Are Recognised by Hong Kong and International Institutions], 6 August 2017, <http://www.christianweekly.net/2017/ta2031082.htm>; Chan-Yeung, *The Practical Prophet*, 122–127.

¹⁷⁷ David M. Paton, *R.O.: The Life and Times of Bishop Hall of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: The Diocese of Hong Kong and Macao and the Hong Kong Diocesan Association, 1985), 178–179; Ying Fuk-tsang, 'R.O. Hall and the Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion', in *Christian Encounters with Chinese Culture: Essays on Anglican and Episcopal History in China*, ed. Philip L. Wickeri (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2015), 65–78.

denominations on the Mainland [China].’¹⁷⁸ In other words, for Anglicans, this seems to be a sensible connection to maintain due to its similarity to previous forms of collaboration. The leadership of an Anglican bishop K.H. Ting, for the TSPM and the CCC also strengthened the relationship between the HKSKH and the Christian leaders under this post-denominational system. In some ways, Paul Kwong’s leadership style also reflects Ting’s influence, which will be discussed in later sections.

Kwong’s Biography

Paul Kwong was born in 1950 to a traditionally Anglican family. His great-grandfather, Kwong Yat-sau, was the first Chinese priest in the Diocese of Victoria in 1884, the former diocese to which Hong Kong belonged. Paul Kwong’s career, in some ways, followed the route that his family had taken. Kwong completed his bachelor degree in English language at Lingnan University in 1977, and in 1982, his Master of Divinity at Church Divinity School of the Pacific, an Episcopal seminary connected with the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, California. Kwong then obtained his PhD in theology at the University of Birmingham, UK in 2008, studying under the Sri Lankan postcolonial theologian R.S. Sugirtharajah and the Hong Kong theologian Edmond Tang on the role of identity in light of the transition of Hong Kong from a British colony to an SAR under Mainland China. Before his consecration as Archbishop of the HKSKH in 2007, he was ordained as a deacon in 1982 and a priest in 1983, when Hong Kong was still part of the Diocese of Hong Kong and Macau. He is also one of the few Hong Kong

¹⁷⁸ Philip L. Wickeri, ‘The Vicissitudes of Anglicanism in China, 1912–Present’, in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism, Volume V: Global Anglicanism, c. 1910–2000*, ed. William L. Sachs (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017): 165–166.

Protestant leaders to have taken up the role as a designated member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Council (CPPCC).¹⁷⁹

In the wake of the Umbrella Movement, Hong Kong mass media condemned Paul Kwong as being detached from the public and ignoring the voices of the grassroots; however, his record of public service has been recognised and resulted in several awards. In 2007, Lingnan University, his alma mater, offered him an honorary degree, noting that, regarding his role as Chairman of the Diocesan Youth Committee of the Diocese of Hong Kong and Macau, he had made significant contributions to youth development and education.¹⁸⁰ In 2016, he was awarded the Most Venerable Order of the Hospital of St John of Jerusalem by Queen Elizabeth II for his position as the Dean of the St John Priory of Hong Kong, a non-governmental organisation in medical services.¹⁸¹ Moreover, he received the Dean's Cross Award from the Virginia Theological Seminary in 2017 for his commitment to 'strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being', one year after his appointment as the chairman of the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC).¹⁸² While the arguments of Kwong's opponents will be analysed in the next section, it should be noted that there are diverse opinions from Hong Kong and the West regarding his public theology: some consider his development of social services and education as reaching out to the public, while others may see it as too detached. Nonetheless, Kwong seems to agree that the HKSKH's public engagement should be

¹⁷⁹ Note that Peter Kwong is also a member of the CPPCC. For the current member list, see 'Zhongguo renmin zhengzhi xieshang huiyi dishisanjie quanguo weiyuanhui mingdan' [The Member List of the Thirteenth National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference], The National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, 25 January 2018, <http://www.cppcc.gov.cn/zxww/2018/01/25/ARTI1516834749863530.shtml>.

¹⁸⁰ 'Lingnan to Confer Four Honorary Doctorates at Congregation', Lingnan University, 4 October 2007, <https://www.ln.edu.hk/news/20071004/01/>.

¹⁸¹ 'Queen Awards Honour to Archbishop Paul Kwong and Father Peter Koon', *Echo* 295 (August 2016).

¹⁸² Carol Kyber, 'VTS Honors the Most Reverend Paul Kwong with Dean's Cross Award', *Virginia Theological Seminary*, 14 November 2016, <https://www.vts.edu/page/news-detail?pk=1069493>.

expressed through social and education services, and considers it part of the strengths of the HKSKH.

Anglican Public Theology in Hong Kong

In light of Kwong's roles in the HKSKH, the CPPCC, and even the ACC, this section highlights the themes he focuses on in regard to Anglican engagement with the public, which are, (1) postcolonial theology, (2) the identity struggle of Hong Kong citizens in the post-1997 era, (3) Kwong's interpretation of *via media* with Confucianism, and (4) his comparison of the ecclesial and civil society models of polity in the context of the election of Chief Executive of Hong Kong. It is evident within the Anglican Communion in Hong Kong that there is also a spectrum of diverse public theologies, which will be discussed in the following sections.

*Postcolonialism as Part of Public Theology*¹⁸³

One might think that under the strong influence of its coloniser, the United Kingdom, the HKSKH's public theology has mainly developed from British theologies. However, such an assumption may be overly simplistic for the situation in Hong Kong. Indeed, while the public theology of Hong Kong Anglicans has no doubt been influenced by its coloniser, given its close partnership with the colonial government, it is also the case that since 1997, postcolonial theology has been flourishing among Hong Kong among Anglican theologians such as Angela Wai-ching Wong, Kwok Pui-lan, and Paul Kwong. It may be argued this is not mere coincidence, as the HKSKH had a privileged position before 1997 due to the close relationship

¹⁸³ This thesis uses the term 'postcolonialism' without the hyphen, to imply an interpretation based on an intellectual reaction against the colony, instead of being merely sequential to it. For details, see R.S. Sugirtharajah, 'Charting the Aftermath: A Review of Postcolonial Criticism', in *The Postcolonial Biblical Reader*, ed. R.S. Sugirtharajah (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 7–32.

that Ronald O. Hall developed with the colonial government. Compared to other Protestant denominations in Hong Kong, the HKSKH is more urgent in its quest to distinguish itself from the British colony and to find its place in the postcolonial state, and especially in its intention to maintain a good relationship with the SAR. Although the HKSKH has never been in an oppressed position, its resistance to the colonial era is observable in its attempts to build a relationship with the Communist Party of China (CPC).

Argued by Angela Wai-ching Wong (b. 1959), a PhD graduate of Chicago Divinity School and vice president for programmes at United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia,¹⁸⁴ Asian theology, at its root, is postcolonial.¹⁸⁵ For Wong, Asian theology has had anti-imperialistic motivations from its very beginning, developing discourses in opposition to Western knowledge and power, and resisting the uniformity of Christianity built by missionaries, which Asian Christians, had passively taken for granted in the past. In response to the statement that not all Asian countries were previously colonised and thus do not all need postcolonial theology, she argues that Asian theology needs not simply be about treating Asians as indigenous or as inferior to those in the Western world; instead, it should tell the story of Asians and construct a theology based on identity, power, and resistance, so that Western theology does not position itself at the centre and demand to be treated as universal for all kinds of experiences. Using the postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha's (b. 1949) concept of hybridity, she stresses that the polemics of the East and the West should not be seen as absolute because theology can be

¹⁸⁴ Note that the Chung Chi College at the CUHK was one of the approved institutions where Anglican priests could obtain accreditation for ordination at the HKSKH, before they detached from the former in 2016. For details, see 'Xianggang shenggonghui tuichi chongji shenxueyuan quanli fazhan "Minghua"' [Hong Kong Sheng Kung draws from Chung Chi College to Concentrate on the Development of 'Ming Hua Seminary'], *Echo*, 2097 (15 May 2016).

¹⁸⁵ Angela Wai-ching Wong, 'Asian Theology in a Changing Asia: Towards an Asian Theological Agenda for the 21st Century', paper presented at *Christian Conference of Asia*, Shatin, Hong Kong, accessed 11 February 2019, <http://cca.org.hk/home/ctc/ctc97-cats1/ctc97-cats1g.htm>.

further negotiated and appropriated. Culture, whether of the East or the West, of indigenous origins or of different religious faiths, should always be a negotiation between the East and the West. This approach can assist an understanding of Hong Kong identity, as Paul Kwong elaborates in his monograph.

Similarly, Kwok Pui-lan (b. 1952), a BA graduate of the CUHK and an Anglican theologian at the Candler School of Theology, Emory University, elaborates the multidimensional experiences of Asian Christians. Using the dialogical imagination of postcolonial theology, she attempts to resolve the dilemma of being both Asian and Christian. For Kwok, the Bible should be interpreted in the context of Asian stories, and not merely through the eyes of Western theologians. Although some parts of Asia, such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Singapore, are no longer developing countries, and may not be viewed as having been exploited by imperialism, Asian theology should continue to be constructed through their colonial histories in the wider global context. Thus, the conversation should neither be limited nor dominated by those in power.¹⁸⁶ Kwok has employed feminist liberation theology to be a voice for women in the Global South, whom she considers underrepresented in the past.¹⁸⁷

As for Kwong, although he did attempt to take on the issues of postcolonialism, his approach was not heavily based on liberation theology, as Kwok Pui-lan's was, because he believed that the problem of poverty highlighted in this theology was not Hong Kong's primary concern. This is also the major reason I disagree with Kung Lap-yan's use of liberation theology as elaborated in Chapter 5.¹⁸⁸ The major struggle in Hong Kong society, according to Kwong,

¹⁸⁶ Kwok Pui-lan, *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology* (London: SCM Press, 2005), 38–44.

¹⁸⁷ For details, see Kwok, *Postcolonial Imagination and Feminist Theology*, 150–167.

¹⁸⁸ For details, see 228.

was the tension of identity.¹⁸⁹ While Kwong discussed the use of Minjung theology¹⁹⁰ in his monograph, he did not consider it necessary that the Hong Kong citizens be liberated—at least, not in the sense the word ‘liberation’ implies in Minjung theology or Marxist theory.¹⁹¹

Moreover, although the book *Step by Step in Christ: The Social Service of Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui* claims that Ronald O. Hall was influenced by Gore’s Christian socialism,¹⁹² Kwong, who was the writer of the foreword, never once mentioned Christian socialism in his sermons or writings. It is perhaps his intention to avoid discussing liberation or socialism; nonetheless, it is clear that Kwong’s postcolonial theology is not antagonistic to the state, the PRC and the SAR; rather, it is a form of resistance that emphasises collaboration.

Simon Shui-man Kwan (an associate professor in the CUHK’s Department of Cultural and Religious Studies, and the Associate Director of Divinity School of Chung Chi College), has developed a two-tiered typology which may help explain the differences between Kwok and Kwong. For Kwan, postcolonial theology used to be treated as an oppositional force to the coloniser and Western theology, which he referred to as a mode of resistance. Kwok’s postcolonial theology can be categorised in this way because she stressed on the necessity of the liberation of the powerless—which is, according to Kwan, a binary mode of opposition to colonialism. The second mode of resistance, in terms of postcolonial theology, is collaboration: a type of non-binary and non-oppositional force that reacts to postcolonialism. Kwong’s approach can be counted as the latter, as illustrated by his attempt to collaborate with the state in the

¹⁸⁹ Kwong, *Identity in Community*, 146–150.

¹⁹⁰ According to Kim Dong-kun, ‘Minjung theology developed within the peculiar atmosphere of Korean culture and history, in general, and within the climate of the suffering minjung which occurred during the military dictatorships of the 1970s, in particular.’ For details, see Kim Dong-kun, ‘Korean Minjung Theology in History and Mission’, *Studies in World Christianity* 2, 2 (1996): 167–82.

¹⁹¹ Kwong, *Identity in Community*, 162–171.

¹⁹² Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui, *Bubu jidu*, 3.

postcolonial era. This form of resistance will be further elaborated in the next section about Hong Kong identity.¹⁹³

Although scholars tend to appreciate decolonisation in Hong Kong churches, this is perhaps not the case for the laity in the HKSKH. Chan Long-shing, one of the founding members of St Francis Action (SFA), an Anglican activist group established after the Umbrella Movement, lamented in the SFA's journal *The Voice* about decolonisation in the HKSKH:

The Church follows the preference of the political authority: it speaks of political neutrality, emphasises the necessity of harmony, substitutes direct social actions with institutional social services, and blurs the concept of social justice by encouraging the purification of one's heart and commenting that social justice is a preference and not necessarily a must for Christians.¹⁹⁴

Chan commented that the problem of decolonisation was that this process could not be considered self-improvement or an awakening; instead, it was a compromise for the survival of the church in the face of criticism.¹⁹⁵ Chan's argument expresses the fear that the church would lose its colonial role and those qualities bestowed upon it by its coloniser. Such a struggle is also observable in Kwong's attempt to construct a public theology that confronts the issues of Hong Kong identity.

¹⁹³ Simon Shui-man Kwan, *Postcolonial Resistance and Asian Theology* (London: Routledge, 2014), 60–74.

¹⁹⁴ Chan Long-shing, 'Cong jiaohui "cheonggong" quzhi jingyan kan "quzhihua" de benzhi' [An Analysis of the Essence of 'De-colonisation' from the 'Successful' Experience of Churches], *The Voice* 2 (November 2015), https://issuu.com/stfrancisaction/docs/sfa_voices_2_201511.

¹⁹⁵ Chan's anti-decolonisation is not the sole phenomenon of the HKSKH. For many in the younger generations, both in and outside churches, colonisation is not as problematic as many officials have claimed. Even some of those born after 1997 participated in the discussion of the re-colonisation of Hong Kong and genuinely believed that it should become a British colony again. For details, see Vincent Kwun-leung Lee, 'Li Guanliang zhujiang: Sanbing, gui Ying pai, bentu pai, zijue pai zai sanyun hou hequ hecong' [A Lecture of Vincent Kwun-leung Lee: The Direction of the Umbrella Army, the Party of Resuming British Sovereignty, Localist Groups, and Self-Determined Groups after the Umbrella Movement], Xianggang renwen xuehui [Hong Kong Society of Humanities Lectures], 15 September 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=22SqJ2tuYwE>.

Chinese or Hong Kongese: Identity in Post-1997 Hong Kong

Since 1982, the year the Hong Kong colonial government commenced negotiation on the Handover with the PRC, the issue of identity has been raised by many of its citizens. Should they refer to themselves as Hong Kongers, Hong Kongers in China, Chinese in Hong Kong, or simply Chinese? In light of this identity crisis of the Hong Kong citizens, university research centres in Hong Kong have conducted several polls since 1985—one year after the confirmation of the Sino-British Joint Declaration signed by Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher and Zhao Ziyang—to analyse the perception of identity among Hong Kong citizens. These research centres mainly investigated the four categories mentioned above to see which category Hong Kong citizens identified themselves with.¹⁹⁶ The results showed that Hong Kong citizens in the 1980s and early 1990s had a greater tendency to label themselves as Hong Kongers than as Chinese. During the late 1990s, within the first ten years of Hong Kong becoming an SAR, Hong Kong citizens increasingly recognised themselves as Chinese, with a peak of 38.6 per cent in the first half year of 2008, the year when Beijing started promoting the Olympics to be held in the summer, which outnumbered those who considered themselves as Hong Kongers (18.1 per cent). However, this self-identification did not last long—especially not after the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, with 69,000 citizens killed and 5 million left homeless due to poor infrastructure of the buildings.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶ For details, see the longitudinal study by sociologist Lau Siu-kai, and the yearly statistics in the public opinion programme, University of Hong Kong: Lau Siu-kai, “‘Xianggangren’ huo ‘Zhongguoren’: Xianggan Huaren de shenfen renting, 1985–1995’ [Hong Kongese or Chinese: The Identity of Hong Kong Chinese 1985–1995], *Ershiyi shiji* [Twenty-First Century] 41 (June 1997): 43–58; HKU Pop Site, ‘You Would Identify Yourself as a Hongkonger/English/Chinese in Hong Kong/Hongkonger in China’, Public Opinion Programme, University of Hong Kong, accessed 11 November 2018, <https://www.hkpopop.hku.hk/english/popexpress/ethnic/eidentity/poll/datatables.html>.

¹⁹⁷ Ian Johnson, ‘After-Shocks of the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake’, *The New York Review of Books*, 9 May 2018, <https://www.nybooks.com/daily/2018/05/09/after-shocks-of-the-2008-sichuan-earthquake/>; James Daniell, ‘Sichuan 2008: A Disaster on an Immense Scale’, *BBC News*, 9 May 2013, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-22398684>.

The sense of Hong Konger identity grew stronger due to further political tension arising from several major political events, including the moral and national education controversy of 2012 and the Umbrella Movement in 2014. In the survey taken in December 2014, 42.3 per cent of Hong Kong citizens labelled themselves as Hong Konger, while merely 19.5 per cent considered themselves as Chinese. The shift of the Hong Konger–Chinese identity is evident in the midst of these political events.

The moral and national education controversy, as a major event that caused the rise of Hong Kong identity, refers to new policies proposed by the Education Bureau of Hong Kong in the early 2010s. Upon the release of the proposed syllabus, many criticised the new curriculum as too patriotic—even communist—fearing that the PRC might attempt to disseminate communist ideas through education. In September 2012, more than 120,000 protesters, including the Protestant activist Joshua Wong (b. 1996) and the Catholic Cardinal Joseph Zen (b. 1932), campaigned for the cancellation of this curriculum. Although the protest ultimately led to the abandonment of the project, Hong Kong citizens became more negative towards their nation and worried that the PRC might encroach upon their religious freedom or freedom of speech.¹⁹⁸

The Umbrella Movement also strengthened Hong Kongese identity. One of the aims of this democratic movement was to seek universal suffrage from the Chief Executive of Hong Kong. The movement started on 26 September 2014 with the occupation of the Civil Square, an open area of the headquarters of the Hong Kong Government, and lasted for seventy-nine days. During the protest, church leaders, lay Christians, university students, and political parties actively campaigned for democracy. This was a rare occasion in which Hong Kong church

¹⁹⁸ Jennifer Ngo, ‘Protest against National Education to End after Government Climbdown’, *South China Morning Post*, 9 September 2012, <https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/article/1032535/protest-against-national-education-end-after-government-climbdown>.

leaders were involved in protests, as most thought that churches should be separate from politics.¹⁹⁹ As a result, many Christians, whether pastoral leaders or lay persons, questioned the meaning of separation of church and state.

Figures from the research centres have rightly supported Kwong's argument regarding identity as a significant factor affecting the church-state relations in post-colonial Hong Kong, given the struggle of its citizens to interact with the state, the PRC. The identity struggle initially arose in the wake of the Handover negotiations of 1982 and, as argued by Kwong as well as by the Hong Kong historians Beatrice Leung and Chan Shun-hing, this factor altered the dynamics of the church-state relationship.²⁰⁰ While Kwong suggests that the rise of Hong Kongese identity led to a social dichotomy, Leung and Chan illustrated Hong Kong citizens' fear that the PRC might impinge upon their religious freedoms, even under the protection of the 'One Country, Two Systems' policy.²⁰¹

To illustrate how the Hong Kong identity may affect the church-state relationship, both Paul Kwong and Timothy Chi-pei Kwok (b. 1959), Bishop of the Diocese of Eastern Kowloon

¹⁹⁹ For further descriptions, see Rishi Lyengar, '6 Questions You Might Have About Hong Kong's Umbrella Revolution', *Time*, 5 October 2014, <http://time.com/3471366/hong-kong-umbrella-revolution-occupy-central-democracy-explainer-6-questions/>.

²⁰⁰ Kwong, *Identity in Community*, 105; Leung and Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong*, 84.

²⁰¹ As elaborated in Chapter 1, this fear is expressed in the 'Statement of Religious Freedom', along with the 'Statement of Faith', in which many Protestant leaders stressed that they treasured the established relationship built between the church and the government, in light of their partnership in social and education services. Although these social and education services were funded by the colonial government before 1997, the schools and social service centres were mainly managed by different denominations. Hence, these leaders urged that the situation should remain the same after the Handover, which implied that these organisations would still have the religious freedom to educate and train their employees according to their faith. Moreover, they expressed the need to maintain contact with other Christians in the world, not only within their denomination, but 'as a member of the global church...[to] share the hope of Hong Kong people with people in other nations through the international church'. This tension between the Protestant leaders and the Chinese government seems to have been resolved after Ji Pengfei (1910–2000), Director of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office (1983–1990), promised to keep Hong Kong's existing religious policy in place and not to impose the TSPM's model to Hong Kong. For details of the statement, see Lam Chak, 'Xianggang jidutu Beijing fangwentuan dui Xianggang qiantu yijian shu' [Opinions of the Hong Kong Protestants Delegation to Beijing on the Future of Hong Kong], *Xinxi [Message]* (September 1984): 3–4, 6–7; Leung and Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong*, 85–90.

and a PhD graduate of the University of Birmingham, have elaborated the struggle of the Hong Kongese as citizens with their mixed identity, being in an SAR and in Mainland China. Kwong argued in 2011 that the sense of Hong Kongese identity did not bring solidarity to community in the SAR; rather, he claimed that such emphasis on identifying as Hong Kongese merely created an ethos.²⁰² For Kwok, although the Hong Kongese gradually accepted themselves as ‘Hong Kong Chinese’ instead of merely ‘Hong Kongese’, most had a ‘complex sense of belonging and the mixed feeling about reunification [of the HKSAR and Mainland China]’.²⁰³ Both Kwong and Kwok considered such dual identity, which the latter termed a ‘hybrid identity’,²⁰⁴ to be a challenge for churches to engage in dialogue with the state as well as with the public.

The term ‘hybrid identity’ in Kwok’s PhD thesis develops Kwong’s discussion of dual identity, which focused on the Handover of Hong Kong as leading to the dual citizenship of the Hong Kongese. In contrast to Paul Kwong’s suggestion that Hong Kong citizens hold two identities simultaneously, Timothy Kwok employed ‘the third space’, a notion put forward by Bhabha²⁰⁵ to illustrate the influence of the postcolonial experience on one’s identity, based on translation and negotiation within the liminal space.²⁰⁶ Kwok argues that an ambiguous identity allows one to open negotiation and expand imagination; thus, it can initiate a theological dialogue between the two identities and, perhaps, lead to new insights because of the assets of and the navigability between the identities of being both Hong Kongese and Chinese, or being Hong Kongese and Anglican.²⁰⁷ For Kwong, identity differences should not result in demeaning,

²⁰² Kwong, *Identity in Community*, 68–69.

²⁰³ Timothy Chi-pei Kwok, ‘Beyond Binary Opposition: Hybridity and Reconciliation in the Context of Hong Kong’ (PhD diss., University of Birmingham, 2014), 9–11.

²⁰⁴ Note that Kwong does not use the term ‘hybrid identity’ in his thesis. However, his ideas seem to argue for such a phenomenon—that identity can be fluid, and there can exist an excluded middle between two identities. Kwong, *Identity in Community*, 214–216.

²⁰⁵ For details, see Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 2012), 56.

²⁰⁶ Kwok, ‘Beyond Binary Opposition’, 33.

²⁰⁷ Kwok, ‘Beyond Binary Opposition’, 19–20.

excluding, or distorting of the other; rather, as with Miroslav Volf's (b. 1956) proposal for Croatians in the ethnic and cultural conflicts, Hong Kongese should seek to embrace differences and respect one another.²⁰⁸ While his emphasis on harmony will be discussed in the next section, it should be noted that, in terms of his own identity, Kwong seemed to be very 'proud to be part of China', affirming the regular cooperation between the HKSKH and the Chinese government in the context of social welfare and church ministry.²⁰⁹ Nevertheless, his acclamation of the nation would be a contrast with many evangelical leaders in Hong Kong,²¹⁰ as most hold negative feelings towards the PRC and its imposition of patriotism on Hong Kong citizens, especially since the moral and national education controversy of 2012.²¹¹ Kwong was comparatively a minority voice among Protestants in his public declaration of patriotism towards China. His identity as Chinese and as Archbishop shaped his public theology in his harmonious interactions within the Christian community and with the public—that is, with society.

Harmony or Compromise? Kwong's View of Via Media

Harmony should not be an alien term for many Chinese people, as it finds its origins in Confucianism and has been promoted by the CPC in the importance of a harmonious society (*hexie shehui*) since the reign of Hu Jintao (b. 1942). Notably, the three groups investigated in this thesis have different approaches towards the application of harmony in public theology.

²⁰⁸ Kwong's monograph is heavily based on Volf's discussion in *Exclusion and Embrace*. For details, see Kwong, *Identity in Community*, 219–222; Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 1–31.

²⁰⁹ Kwong, 'The Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui', 256.

²¹⁰ Kwong, 'The Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui', 256.

²¹¹ While this incident will be elaborated in Chapter 3 and 5, it is noteworthy that, due to the lack of national education in the colonial era, most Hong Kong citizens are not comfortable with such a programme, and especially the concept of loving the Communist Party of China, as equivalent as loving the nation. See Alexis Lai, "'National Education' Raises Furor in Hong Kong", *CNN*, 30 July 2012, <https://edition.cnn.com/2012/07/30/world/asia/hong-kong-national-education-controversy/index.html>.

Dennis Ng, President of the China Victory Theological Seminary of Hong Kong, proposes the use of the ‘theology of harmony’,²¹² a term he developed in his monograph, to contribute to resolving conflicting societies in Mainland China.²¹³ He notes that, due to the anti-foreign attitude in the early twentieth century, one may wonder if Christianity can be compatible with Chinese culture. Thus, he states that, since the concept of harmony is deeply rooted in Chinese culture, as shown in the CPC’s campaign of ‘building a socialist harmonious society’ (*goujian shehui zhuyi hexie shehui*), the theology of harmony may complement the current dichotomy of Christianity and Chinese culture, and bring it into the conversation with world Christianity. He stresses that, because of the struggle (*pidou*) that took place during the Cultural Revolution, confrontation may not be the best solution in this day and age with regard to the conversation on public theology. For him, harmony may instead find a common ground between an atheist regime and Christianity, when the two seem to conflict with each other.²¹⁴

Kwong’s approach to harmony regarding the policy of ‘building a socialist harmonious society’ in Mainland China is perhaps less critical than that taken by the scholars in Sino-Christian theology.²¹⁵ This is understandable for his position in the political realm—as a member of the CPPCC, he has no responsibility to draft a national goal. Nonetheless, his efforts to bridge

²¹² This concept is also illustrated in the writings of the Indian theologian Felix Wilfred (b. 1948) and Malaysian theologian Jonathan Tan. For details, see Felix Wilfred, *Margins: Sites of Asian Theologies* (Delhi: ISPCK, 2008), 118–134; ‘UCAN Interview—FABC Theologian Speaks on Theology of Harmony in Asia’, UCA News, 20 July 1988, <https://bit.ly/2ze2AxC>; Jonathan Y. Tan, ‘A New Way of Being Church in Asia: The Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences (FABC) at the Service of Life in Pluralistic Asia’, *Missiology: An International Review* 33, 1 (January 2005): 79–81.

²¹³ Dennis T.W. Ng, *Theology of Harmony: In Search of the Roots and Development of Chinese Theology* (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing, 2018).

²¹⁴ Dennis T.W. Ng, ‘Relationship between Society, Church and the Public Sphere in Today’s China’, paper presented at *Christianity in the Public Sphere in Africa and Asia*, Andrew Walls Centre for the Study of African and Asian Christianity, 1–3 July 2018.

²¹⁵ For details, see the argument in Chapter 3.

the gap between Christianity and groups with different religiophilosophies²¹⁶ are evident in his interaction with these groups, while positioning himself as Archbishop and as a member of the CPPCC. With respect to the HKSKH's position on the coexisting of different religiophilosophies in Hong Kong society, Kwong states that '[as] Anglicans in the Sheng Kung Hui, we want to develop a theology of religious pluralism, not the "Christian exclusivist" theology of some Protestant churches'.²¹⁷ He argues that 'the life and practices of Buddhists, Dalits, Jewish, [Baha'i] and other religious communities, and our friendships with them, can help to make us better Christians...[and make] life more complex, but also more interesting, and more loving'.²¹⁸

In developing the issue of identity, Kwong suggests that Hong Kong citizens, especially the Christian community, should embrace their identity as Chinese and welcome their neighbours in Mainland China, so that Hong Kong society can once again become inclusive and harmonious.²¹⁹ Employing the concept of *via media*, Kwong argues that the middle way is not remote to Chinese culture as it is also highlighted in The Doctrine of the Mean (*Zhongyong*), one of the four books of Confucianism.²²⁰ Kwong claims that, by treating others with gentleness and forbearance, a society can become harmonious. Different from the original usage by John Henry Newman (1801–1890) that highlighted the middle way of Anglican ecclesiology between popery and dissent,²²¹ *via media* is perceived by Kwong as a means to strengthen relationships in society. In 2015, he was invited as a Christian representative—and the only representative from

²¹⁶ Note that both Rowan Williams and Paul Kwong prefer the term 'religious pluralism'. However, the problem with this term is that it excludes two types of philosophy—Confucianism and Marxist atheism, which, in some ways, cannot be counted as religion at all.

²¹⁷ Kwong, *Identity in Community*, 233.

²¹⁸ Kwong, *Identity in Community*, 233.

²¹⁹ Paul Kwong, 'The Archbishop's Christmas Message 2013', *Echo*, 19 December 2013.

²²⁰ Note that Kwong is not the only theologian who correlates public theology with the doctrine of the mean. Lai Pan-chiu, the Sino-Christian theologian who will be discussed in Chapter 3, has also explored this concept. Kwong, 'The Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui', 261.

²²¹ John Henry Newman, *The 'Via Media' of the Anglican Church*, ed. H. D. Weidner (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990).

Hong Kong—to the Boao Forum for Asia²²² to discuss this concept of the middle way, along with the other Buddhist and Muslim leaders. In order to define the middle way in Christianity, Kwong used Romans 12:3 to elaborate that the judgment of oneself should be based on God’s measurement: ‘For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.’ Strictly speaking, he did not pinpoint the position that Christians should adopt. However, he considered that, since Christians are part of the body of Christ, when others are stronger than us, we should be humble; when others are weaker, Christians should be forgiving and accepting, thus respecting each other and learning to live in harmony. This seems to complement the dialogue of the other religious leaders in the forum: for example, a Buddhist leader might speak of harmony in society and of respecting each other to avoid dichotomy whilst a Muslim leader might speak of the middle way as an appropriate means of achieving peace and mutual kindness.²²³

Therefore, due to his understanding of *via media*, Kwong opposes all manner of extreme values that may be present in Christianity. In response to the religious extremism of which the CPC was cautious, Kwong did not directly deny that Christianity was sometimes expressed as a form of extremism. Instead, he skilfully directed the attention of his audience to religion as part of the society and how its function might assist in improving that society. He suggested that social and education services, the HKSKH’s strength, could function in this way to build a

²²² This is an annual forum held in Asia to exchange knowledge between leaders from government, business, and academia. For details, see Boao Forum for Asia, ‘About Boao’, accessed 30 April 2020, <http://english.boaoforum.org/hnboao.jhtml>.

²²³ Chu Hengan, ‘Boao Yazhou luntan juxing “zhongdao yuanrong: ningju shanyuan de liliang” zongjiao dianshi bianlun’ [The Religious Debate TV Show in Boao Forum for Asia: “Middle Way and Harmony: Gathering the Power of Goodwill], *Jidu shibao* [*Christian Times*], 30 March 2015, <https://bit.ly/3aqR5kt>.

harmonious society.²²⁴ As such, he spoke as a public theologian in light of his interpretation of *via media*, although he did not directly allude to the political implications of the CPC's policy.

In terms of *via media* in the HKSKH, although Kwong does not state as such in his article, it seems that there is a parallel with K.H. Ting's usage of the term and the doctrine of the mean. Similar to Newman, both Ting and Kwong highlight the middle way of Anglican ecclesiology between Catholicism and Protestantism, which will be explored in the next section, but Ting and Kwong emphasise not going to extremes in terms of interpersonal relationships in order to reach harmony in society.²²⁵ This is further reflected in Kwong's speech at the Taize International Meeting in Hong Kong in 2018: for him, Hong Kong 'has been deeply divided over the years by the political riots', and the elements of trust and reconciliation must be brought back to Hong Kong through peaceful meetings.²²⁶ His emphasis on harmony seems to be supported by Wickeri, his advisor and formerly the English secretary of Ting, who likewise addresses the importance of mutual understanding in a deeply divided society. For Wickeri, reconciliation is essential so that peace and concord can be reinstated in spite of different political and economic positions.²²⁷

Given his stress on harmony, it is no surprise that Kwong was one of the dominant voices opposing the Umbrella Movement because, to him, the democratic movement was in an 'extreme

²²⁴ Wang Xinyi, 'Baoa luntan Xianggang shenggonghui dazhujiao Kuang Baolo tan Xianggang zongjiao fazhan mianlin de sanda tiaozhan' [In Baoa Forum Archbishop of Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Paul Kwong Speaks of the Three Major Challenges of the Religious Development in Hong Kong], *Shidai luntan* [Christian Times], 30 March 2015, <https://bit.ly/2G94tvG>.

²²⁵ Li Jieren, *In Search of the Via Media between Christ and Marx: A Study of Bishop Ding Guangxun's Contextual Theology* (Lund: Lund University, 2008), 357–368.

²²⁶ 'A Message from the Paul Kwong, Archbishop of Hong Kong Anglican Church', Taize HK 2018, last modified 29 July 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9fR-rWxQTKc>.

²²⁷ Philip L. Wickeri, 'Christianity as an Urban Religion: An Historical Reflection on Mission and Evangelism, with Implications for Hong Kong and Mainland China Today', paper presented at *Lutheran Theological Seminary Urban Mission Series*, Hong Kong, 24 March 2017.

position'²²⁸ that threatened to destroy harmonious relationships both within Hong Kong society and with the PRC.²²⁹ The middle way is thus a crucial aspect of Anglican public theology in Hong Kong that may bring people together as one family, both Christians and non-Christians. In fact, his position of upholding the middle way has been condemned by the public media and the Protestant community as pro-communist because, in their view, he ignores the voices of Hong Kong citizens. These diverse opinions will be further discussed in an examination of the election of the Chief Executive in Hong Kong in the next section.

One may think that, as Kwong is situated in the Chinese-Hong Kongese dilemma as the Archbishop of the HKSKH, his position on the coexistence of different voices in harmony is merely based on Hong Kong's situation. However, as the current chairman of the Anglican Consultative Council,²³⁰ one of the four Instruments of Communion in the Anglican Communion that exchanges opinions between the layperson and clergy leadership,²³¹ Kwong also refers to harmony in the context of the whole Anglican Communion: despite the different opinions among the Anglican Communion regarding same-sex marriage, different dioceses in the world should maintain a dialogue with one another for consensus, as brothers and sisters.

As with the voices of opposition in the Hong Kong public media, his position of bringing peace to the Anglican Communion has been considered by Western media as a compromise of the values of the Communion. According to David Virtue, the editor of the Anglican newspaper *Virtue Online* and a member of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA), Kwong's

²²⁸ Kwong, 'The Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui', 261.

²²⁹ Paul Kwong, 'Puxuan bushi wanlingdan' [Universal Suffrage is not a Panacea], *Echo* 1956, 1 September 2013.

²³⁰ For the history of the Anglican Consultative Council, see Kenneth A. Locke, *The Church in Anglican Theology: A Historical, Theological and Ecumenical Exploration* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009), 110–111.

²³¹ The other three are the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference of Bishops, and the Primates Meeting. Rebecca Wilson, 'ACC Elects Primate as Chair', *House of Deputies News*, 15 April 2016, <https://deputynews.org/acc-elects-primate-as-chair/>.

leadership is ineffective and blind to the schism within the Anglican Communion over the differing opinions on sexuality.²³² Coming from the ACNA, a denomination that opposes homosexuality, Virtue considers that faith and order cannot be fully implemented when the Anglican Communion itself is not in unity due to the ‘embrace of pansexuality’ in some countries in the Global North. While Kwong, in his interview with Virtue, highlights the importance of working with people and connecting them together in the Communion, Virtue comments that ‘peace is not blindly accepting the other side’s terms for peace’.²³³ Although his words refer to the disagreement within the Anglican Communion, they may also be applied to the schism among Protestant leaders in Hong Kong concerning the election of the Chief Executive.

Ecclesial Model of Polity: A Discussion of the Election of the Chief Executive of Hong Kong

Due to his beliefs on harmony and the importance of *via media*, Kwong’s political stance seems to follow this trend as well—he clearly shows an attempt to work with different religious and political parties. However, it should be stressed that Kwong’s emphasis on working with the state was not unusual in the HKSKH. ‘Ranked fifth on the government’s protocol list, following only the governor, Chief Justice, Chief Secretary, and Commander-General’,²³⁴ Anglican bishops did play a significant role in the Hong Kong government prior to 1997. Thus, being a leader of the HKSKH seems to predetermine his position of working closely with the government. Kwong states, ‘we cannot afford to be on our own and we cannot live by ourselves’ on behalf of the Christian community. He argues that since Christians are a minority group of only five per cent

²³² David W. Virtue, ‘The Anglican Communion: “There Are None So Blind...”’, *Virtue Online*, 18 October 2016, <https://www.virtueonline.org/anglican-communion-there-are-none-so-blind>.

²³³ Virtue, ‘The Anglican Communion’.

²³⁴ Leung and Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong*, 90–91.

in Hong Kong, they should maintain a harmonious relationship with other citizens in society.²³⁵ This is further demonstrated in Kwong's comment on the election of the Chief Executive of Hong Kong, as well as in his statement in *Echo* about the Umbrella Movement and why he does not support universal suffrage, in light of his position as a Christian leader.

The church's dispute over the nomination of representatives in elections can be traced back to 1999. As Kwong indicates, during the first HKSAR election for the Legislative Council, the leaders of Catholic churches and of some Protestant churches had criticised the undemocratic approach to the selection of the election committee. Despite an unwillingness to participate in the election itself, since the Basic Law requires religious groups to be involved in the election committee, the Hong Kong Christian Council reluctantly selected representatives from Protestant denominations.²³⁶ Kwong comments that, as the churches were uncooperative and passive regarding the election, the government decided to 'sideline the Church and rely more upon other religious groups [such as Daoist and Buddhist associations] for support in carrying out its policies'.²³⁷ While the uncooperative action of Protestant leaders was intensified in the 2016 election of the selection committee, which will be explored in Chapter 5, it should be noted that, due to a different understanding of separation of church and state, many evangelical leaders were reluctant to participate in any political activities. The election of the selection committee is only one of the many events that illustrates this tendency.

For Kwong, the lack of universal suffrage was not the practice in the HKSKH either. Since the Umbrella Movement, many had challenged the voting systems both within and outside churches. Regarding the synod of HKSKH, Kwong also received criticism that not all church

²³⁵ Kwong, *Identity in Community*, 233.

²³⁶ Kwong, *Identity in Community*, 132–133.

²³⁷ Kwong, *Identity in Community*, 133–134.

members had been consulted on this matter. In response to these comments, Kwong indicated that the synod was a perfect combination of the ecclesial models of Catholicism and Protestantism, and, for him, a feature of Anglicanism that followed *via media*. The standing committee of the general synod was authorised to act on behalf of the general synod, under the synod's existing representative system. Kwong also stressed that, within the three-tier system—vestry, diocesan synod, and general synod—a member could express his or her view in the system. He noted that the duty of HKSKH members was not to fight for the interests of oneself but to listen to God's will and consider the well-being of the church as a whole. He claimed that the HKSKH was a hybrid of the reformed and the Catholic traditions, led by both the laity and the clergy, who discussed church matters on an 'equal footing'.

It is understandable that Kwong, as a fourth-generation Anglican who is familiar with the representative system, does not prefer universal suffrage. Extending his ecclesial view of polity, in his controversial article 'Universal Suffrage is not a Panacea' published in *Echo*, he claims that universal suffrage, in the civil model of polity, cannot solve the social problems in Hong Kong:

Many overestimate the effect of universal suffrage ... and believe that all difficulties can be solved under universal suffrage.... Many places in the world have universal suffrage, but they still have social, political, and economic problems.... We cannot only emphasise the civil right of election and omit the education to the citizens that they also need to bear social responsibility and sacrifice [for society].²³⁸

Kwong suggested that, instead of spreading hatred, Christians should follow the example of Nelson Mandela, who was known for his mutual forgiveness, unity and social reconciliation.

²³⁸ Kwong, 'Puxuan bushi wanlingdan'.

For Kwong, Mandela did not seek revenge against Whites but built and affirmed relationships with them. Similarly, Kwong believed instead of generating tension with the government, Christians should be open-minded and not confine themselves to have universal suffrage as the only effective election system.

Kwong's disagreement with the Umbrella Movement provoked acrimonious reactions within the HKSKH and from the public media, and Christian leaders. Within the HKSKH, some younger members expressed their concern about Kwong's opinions. Chan Long-shing and Joseph Yun-shing Yip, the founding members of the SFA,²³⁹ developed the organisation to provide alternative voices from the younger generation of the HKSKH. For Chan and Yip, it was necessary within the HKSKH to express a democratic voice regarding the Umbrella Movement. In terms of their political views, they would say that they were democratic, in contrast to the dominant opinion in the higher echelons of the HKSKH, which they considered republican. As for its theological standpoint, the SFA expressed in its constitution²⁴⁰ that the establishment of this organisation was in response to the Anglican Communion's Five Marks of Mission, which defined its fourth mission as 'to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation'.²⁴¹ In the SFA's view, the HKSKH should embrace the idea of 'unity in diversity' to allow different voices to be expressed within the Communion. Hence, the SFA criticised The Reverend Canon Peter Douglas Koon, Provincial Secretary General of the HKSKH, for his statement that 'the religious sector in Hong Kong all

²³⁹ Apostles Media, 'Mentu gongyi dishiwuji' [Fight for Justice Episode 15], *Fight for Justice*, 11 April 2016, <https://apostlesmedia.com/20160411/894>.

²⁴⁰ St Francis Action, 'Xunqiu gongrong—Xianggang shenggonghui qingnian guanzhu muzhe yanlun ke Xianggang xiankuang zhi lianshu shengming ke yuezhang' [Seeking Reconciliation: A Co-Signed Statement and a Constitution from the Youth of the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui on the Priest's Opinions and the Current Situation in Hong Kong], accessed 11 February 2019, <http://goo.gl/UWsGQp>.

²⁴¹ 'Marks of Mission', Anglican Communion, accessed 11 February 2019, <https://www.anglicancommunion.org/mission/marks-of-mission.aspx>.

disagreed about the necessity of Occupy Central’,²⁴² arguing that Koon’s opinion disregarded the Five Marks of Mission, the treasured Anglican values, and the diversity of the HKSKH.²⁴³ According to the SFA, harmony does not necessarily mean only one unified voice appearing in the Communion; on the contrary, despite the different political and theological opinions, the HKSKH should still hold together as one church.²⁴⁴

The Archbishop’s comments did raise concerns for the other non-religious groups in the public, because for these groups Paul Kwong did have an authoritative voice representing the religious sector. *The Hong Kong Economic Journal* (HKEJ), a newspaper targeted at professionals and the middle classes, responded in its editorial with the title ‘Democracy is not a Panacea, but the Lack of Democracy is Worrying’, indicating the editor’s fear that the judiciary system would deteriorate with the absence of democracy.

Similar to the HKEJ’s comments, Fung Wai-man, the former executive of the Hong Kong Christian Industrial Committee and a mission officer of the World Council of Churches, indicated that democracy assists in limiting the power of governmental authorities and thus protects the judiciary system. This prevents the corruption of an election, in the event that the Chief Executive provides benefits to his or her voters for winning an election. Furthermore, as indicated by the Baptist theologian Sam Tsang in his article on the Umbrella Movement, Kwong did not touch upon the oppressive system the PRC directed at Hong Kong with regard to the Basic Law. On the contrary, Kwong only mentioned Hong Kong citizens’ xenophobia towards

²⁴² Cheng Chee-jao, ‘Shenggonghui: Zongjiaojie gongshi fan zhan Zhong’ [Sheng Kung Hui: The Religious Section All Disagrees with Occupy Central], *Wenweipo*, 1 April 2014, <http://paper.wenweipo.com/2014/04/01/YO1404010005.htm>.

²⁴³ St Francis Action, ‘Guanyu SFA’ [About the SFA], *The Voice* 1 (January 2015):3, <https://issuu.com/stfrancisaction/docs/sfavoices1201501>.

²⁴⁴ Leung Chung-yan, ‘Shenggonghui qingnian lianshu buman jiaoxing lun “zhan Zhong yiyantang”’ [The Youth of the Sheng Kung Hui Co-Signed a Statement on Their Disagreement of the Diocese’s ‘Monopolised Opinion Regarding Occupy Central’], *Jidu ribao* [The Gospel Herald], 23 April 2014, <http://www.gospelherald.com.hk/news/gen-2915/>.

Mandarin speakers and discrimination against the Mainland Chinese and did not elaborate on the purpose of the public consultation on achieving universal suffrage, which was to fight against an unjust system. Tsang further criticised Kwong's interpretation of Mandela for undermining the fact that Mandela was supposed to be an activist among the oppressed who had revolted against apartheid in South Africa. Thus, the reconciliation took place after the revolution, when Mandela had worked against injustice and spoken for his people, in contrast to Hong Kong's situation where the unjust political system had not been amended. While reconciliation may be considered as one of the actions to be applied to an increasingly dichotomous society, it is probably not the first choice for the oppressed ones in Hong Kong. For many, Kwong's perspective ignored the majority in Hong Kong and neglected their reasons for preferring a democratic election system. This seems to be a continuous dilemma both within the Protestant circle and amongst the general public—for how they should face an election system that seems not to represent them.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to analyse the public theology of Paul Kwong, illustrating how he, as Archbishop of the HKSKH, demonstrates a form of Anglican public theology in Hong Kong. With a dual identity as a Chinese person and an Anglican leader, he skilfully follows the middle way to negotiate the role of churches among different religious and political parties: while he embraces the importance of harmony in Chinese society, he also treasures the HKSKH's tradition of continuing to develop a relationship with the state, both with the SAR and with the PRC. With a fluid identity of being Chinese and Hong Kongese, he navigates both sides and seeks for reconciliation—to 'work together for the good of the nation'. This is, for him, a responsibility as a Hong Kong citizen and as a Christian leader.

Although he is criticised as being anti-democratic, his involvement in the ACC seems to show that his leadership style is not as top-to-bottom as the public media portrays it, considering ACC as an institution in the Anglican Community that ought to encourage the interaction between laity and clergy. He makes efforts to include church members in decision making. Perhaps a systematic change in the polity is not as visible yet, since transforming a church culture takes time, even after the amendment of certain constitutions. As can be seen in the revision of the HKSKH's policy in 2016, the synod did attempt to improve its method of electing the Archbishop and the other members in the synod, although there was still room for further discussion on such issues.²⁴⁵

The uniqueness of the HKSKH's public theology, or perhaps that of Kwong, is that it is heavily driven by its interaction with the state. The dialogues raised in this chapter are based on the polity realm the HKSKH is situated in, through its cooperation with the CPC or Kwong's role in the CPPCC. However, to state that Kwong's public theology is merely influenced by the political sphere is an oversimplification. As argued by the Bishop of London J.W.C. Wand (1885–1977), nationalism is a major emphasis in Anglican ideology—not only in the United Kingdom, but also outside of it:

What is interesting from the point of view [of] Anglicanism as a whole is that this close connection between church and state in England has stamped a national character even on its daughter churches in countries where there is no establishment. It has given its members a wide humanitarian outlook, an interest in civic affairs, an impulse to associate the gospel

²⁴⁵ 'Zongyihui tongguo "jiaohui zhengce menjian"' [General Synod Passed 'the Church Policy Document'], *Echo* 2101 (12 June 2016).

with every aspect of social life which cause its membership to acquire a national interest and outlook.²⁴⁶

The gesture Kwong expresses as an archbishop in his public, society, seems to be a continuity of the Anglican tradition, which may not necessarily be influenced by his own political view, as some may claim. Following the example of the other Chinese Anglicans, such as K.H. Ting and Peter Kwong, Paul Kwong does not reject the opportunity to work with the other parties of different faiths. When we move to Chapter 3, we may notice how Paul Kwong's concept of harmony differs from that of the scholars in Sino-Christian theology, who continue the conversation in their public—the academy.

²⁴⁶ J.W.C. Wand, *Anglicanism in History and Today* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1961), 68.

CHAPTER 3

Public Theology of Scholars in Sino-Christian Theology: Lai Pan-chiu

If Sino-Christian theology is an eternal chant of an individual's life, it is a chant on the [public] square—[I] hope that it can continuously be sung on the square publically with more freedom.

—Lai Pan Chiu²⁴⁷

Moving beyond the stage of Anglican theologians in Hong Kong, we now turn to a group of scholars who are actively engaging the public academically—scholars in Sino-Christian theology. This group of scholars is situated mostly within the Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) and the Institute of Sino-Christian Studies (ISCS), the latter being an organisation founded at Tao Fong Shan²⁴⁸ by the Norwegian Sinologist Karl Ludvig Reichelt (1877–1952) in 1995 to promote the contextualisation of Christian theology in Chinese culture. As shown on the ISCS's website, as of 2019, around two-thirds of the scholars in the ISCS, including visiting scholars, academic partners, and research associates, were from Mainland China, and one-sixth were based in Hong Kong; the remaining were primarily Chinese diaspora and Western scholars

²⁴⁷ Lai Pan-chiu, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue—cong shenxue dao jidu zongjiao yanjiu* [Sino-Christian Theology in the Public Square—From Theology to Christian Studies] (Hong Kong: Logos and Pneuma Press, 2014), 7.

²⁴⁸ Note that Tao Fong Shan has been a venue to communicate with Chinese religious culture since 1930, when the Norwegian Sinologist Karl Ludvig Reichelt (1877–1952) established the Chinese Study Centre on Chinese Religion (Now renamed as Tao Fong Shan Christian Centre). For the history of Tao Fong Shan, see Ying Fuk-tsang, 'R.O. Hall and the Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion', in *Christian Encounters with Chinese Culture: Essays on Anglican and Episcopal History in China* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press), 65–78; For the details of Reichelt's biography and his theology, see Andrew F. Walls, *Crossing Cultural Frontiers: Studies in the History of World Christianity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2017), 233–238.

with an interest in Sino-Christian theology.²⁴⁹ Since our focus is on public theology in Hong Kong, this chapter will cover theologians who are either Hong Kongese or have a strong connection with Hong Kong. The main figure studied in this chapter is Lai Pan-chiu at the CUHK, an established scholar in Sino-Christian theology as well as in interreligiophilosophical dialogue²⁵⁰ and ecumenical conversations.

To begin, the chapter will highlight the characteristics of the academy as one of the three publics in David Tracy's categorisation²⁵¹ and the roles of scholars in Sino-Christian theology, before narrating the history of the development of Sino-Christian theology. The subsequent section will briefly describe the academic background of Lai Pan-chiu. The second half of this chapter will discuss four themes that appear in Lai's public theology: (1) Hong Kong's identity issue and its relation to patriotism, (2) the concept of harmony, (3) interreligiophilosophical dialogue, and (4) ecumenical ecclesiology.

Although Lai is the main figure studied in this chapter, I will also investigate other prominent scholars in the field, such as Jason Lam and Xie Zhibin, who have also published on this topic. This chapter will mainly use Lai's monograph, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue* (*Sino-Christian Theology in the Public Square*), and his articles in various journals, especially those in *Daofeng* (*Logos and Pneuma*), which had a special issue on the intersection of public theology and Sino-Christian theology.

²⁴⁹ 'Academic Staff', Institute of Sino-Christian Studies, accessed 22 April 2019, <http://www.iscs.org.hk/Common/Reader/Channel/ShowPage.jsp?Cid=96&Pid=4&Version=0&page=0>.

²⁵⁰ The reason for using the term 'interreligiophilosophical dialogue' instead of interreligious dialogue is to be more inclusive for this conversation—not merely about religions such as Buddhism, Daoism, and Christianity, but also about philosophies such as Confucianism and Marxism.

²⁵¹ David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (London: SCM Press, 1981), 3–46

The Public for Scholars in Sino-Christian Theology: The Academy

Scholars in Sino-Christian theology, such as Lai Pan-chiu, Jason Lam, Xie Zhibin, and Yang Huilin, tend to employ the methodology developed by David Tracy²⁵²—particularly regarding his categorisation of the three types of publicness: church, academy, and society—and self-identify as voices from the academy. Developing from this typology, I will argue how this group of scholars develops a type of public theology from their public of the academy.²⁵³

As I briefly explained in the introduction, I do not prefer Lai's word choice of 'public square', because it connotes a type of American democracy that does not necessarily appear in East Asian countries. Nonetheless, Lai's use of the term 'public square' is noteworthy as he considers the term evocative of the squares he previously visited in some Chinese cities. During one of his evening walks in a city, he observed groups of dancers of different ages performing various types of dances in a square. Despite apparent differences between all these dancers, they showed commonality in the freedom to choose their preferred dance group according to their own rhythm and experience. Just as this kind of square is accessible by all citizens, for Lai, public theology in the dialogue of Sino-Christian theology should also be flexible and fluid, allowing one to proceed from one group to another.²⁵⁴ He states that the study of Sino-Christian

²⁵² Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 3–46.

²⁵³ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 6; Jason Lam, 'Cong hanyu shenxue jinnian guanzhu de jixiang yiti jianshi shenxue fansi he shehui fazhan de guanxi' [The Development of Theological Themes in relation to the Changing Chinese Society], in *Zhengzhi yu gonggong: Zhongxi shenxue dui tan* [Political and Public: Western and Chinese Theological Discourse], ed. Michael Welker and Jason Lam (Hong Kong: Logos and Pneuma Press, 2014), 159–160; Xie Zhibin, "'Shehui xing" yihuo "shenxue xing": Hanyu shenxue yu Zhongguo shehui' ['Social' or 'Theological': Sino-Christian Theology and Chinese Society], *Daofeng: Jidujiao wenhua pinglun* [Logos and Pneuma: Chinese Journal of Theology] 32 (Spring 2010): 81–82; Yang Huilin and Xie Zhibin, 'Hanyu shenxue yu gonggong kongjian: Shenxue lunti yinjie' [Sino-Christian Theology and the Public Sphere: An Introduction to Theological Themes], *Daofeng: Jidujiao wenhua pinglun* [Logos and Pneuma: Chinese Journal of Theology] 32 (Spring 2010): 19; Yang Huilin and Daniel H.N. Yeung, 'Editor's Preface', in *Sino-Christian Studies in China*, ed. Yang Huilin and Daniel H.N. Yeung (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006), xiii–xvii.

²⁵⁴ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 6–8.

theology is like the scene he saw in the square—scholars in this field may have different types of academic training and be at different career stages but their passion or concern for Christianity, Chinese society, and/or Chinese culture unites them to form a new community.

Another feature of the academy as one of the three publics is its churchlessness, as suggested by Jason Lam, a research associate at the ISCS and Senior Lecturer in Christian Thought at the Melbourne School of Theology.²⁵⁵ For Lam, the term ‘ecclesiology’ is problematic in this context because it assumes that all churches are institutionalised.²⁵⁶ While this is usually the case for local churches, Lam notes that most scholars in Sino-Christian theology are not bound by institutionalised churches, such as Three-Self churches—the state-registered Protestant churches in Mainland China.²⁵⁷ Thus, the nature of the academy is similar to diffused religion as it appears in China,²⁵⁸ in that it is not limited by a church system. For this reason, this type of ‘church’ can engage with other parties in the public sphere more easily than church leaders who are required to follow the hierarchy of their institutions.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁵ Jason Lam, ‘Hanyu shenxue gongtongti de chansheng yu yanxu’ [The Emergence and Continuity of the Community of Sino-Christian Theology], *Daofeng: Jidujiao wenhua pinglun* [Logos and Pneuma: Chinese Journal of Theology] 41 (2014): 137; Melbourne School of Theology, ‘Jiaoxue tuandui’ [Teaching Faculty], accessed 30 April 2020, http://chinese.mst.edu.au/?page_id=506.

²⁵⁶ Jason Lam, ‘Hanyu shenxue de she qun xing shenfen’ [The Social Identity of Sino-Christian Theologians], in *Chuancheng yu fazhan: Di si jie hanyu jidujiao yanjiu yuanzhuo huiyi lunwei ji* [Inheritance and Development: Essays from the 4th Roundtable Symposium of Sino-Christian Studies], ed. Daniel H.N. Yeung, Jason Lam, and Xin Gao (Hong Kong: Institute of Sino-Christian Studies, 2012), 168–170.

²⁵⁷ Note that constructing theology by non-believers or by someone not affiliated with a church is not uncommon in the West, which is also reiterated in Li Xiangping’s essay, although he uses the word *qujiaohuixing* (The removal of churchness) instead of *wujiaohuixing* (Churchlessness). For details, see Li Xiangping, ‘Hanyu Shenxue: “Wuxing de jiaohui” yu “gonggong de xinyang”’ [Sino-Christian Theology: ‘Invisible Church’ and ‘Public Faith’], in *Zhengzhi yu gonggong: Zhongxi shenxue dui tan* [Political and Public: Western and Chinese Theological Discourse], ed. Michael Welker and Jason Lam (Hong Kong: Logos and Pneuma, 2014), 217–228.

²⁵⁸ According to the sociologist C.K. Yang (1911–1999), diffused religion is ‘a religion having its theology, cultus, and personnel so intimately diffused into one or more secular social institutions that they become a part of the concept, rituals, and structure of the latter, thus having no significant independent existence’, in contrast to institutional religion. For details, see C.K. Yang, *Religion in Chinese Society: A Study of Contemporary Social Functions of Religion and Some of Their Historical Factors* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961), 294–340.

²⁵⁹ Lam, ‘Hanyu shenxue gongtongti de chansheng yu yanxu’, 138. Further discussions can also be found in Li Xiangping’s chapter: Li, ‘Hanyu Shenxue’, 217–228.

Due to its nature of churchlessness, Sino-Christian theology has been criticised because most scholars in this field have been more active in the academy, rather than in local churches.²⁶⁰ Their understanding of the Bible is questioned because they position their faith in a more neutral standpoint that some Hong Kong Protestants may perceive as lacking a strong Christian belief. As I will elaborate on this issue in the next section, it is important to note that, in the pluralistic department of the humanities, integrating academic work with a more neutral faith position is expected. In response to the criticism of their knowledge of the Bible, I would argue that, although scholars in Sino-Christian theology do not highlight their roles in churches, it would be wrong to assume that their faith is not genuine or their theology is not relevant to the church.²⁶¹ The younger generation of the scholars in Sino-Christian theology goes farther by attempting to construct a contextual theology that encompasses their faith.

The Historical Background of Sino-Christian Theology

Sino-Christian theology, by definition, stresses the relationship between Christianity and contemporary Chinese society. In contrast, the term ‘indigenous theology’, popular before 1949 in Mainland China and after 1949 in Taiwan and Hong Kong, emphasises the discussion of Christianity in relation to traditional Chinese culture. Here, Lai highlights the subtle difference of the word *Chinese* in the English language, which can mean Chinese as a language (*Zhongwen*), as an ethnicity (*Zhonghua*), or as a country (*Zhongguo*). In general, the word *Sino* refers to the Chinese language itself, rather than to ethnicity or country.²⁶² Thus, this academic area is not

²⁶⁰ See Choong Chee Pang, ‘Studying Christianity and Doing Theology *Extra Ecclesiam* in China’, in *Christian Theology in Asia*, ed. Sebastian C.H. Kim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 89–108.

²⁶¹ In regards to this critique, I will further discuss Lai’s contribution to such matter, when we elaborate on the publicness of scholars in Sino-Christian theology.

²⁶² Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 28.

only limited to scholars who are Chinese in ethnicity or Chinese by nationality, but is also for those who wish to explore theology through the lens of the Chinese language. The typology below also demonstrates such inclusiveness.

According to the Hong Kong theologian Milton Wei-yiu Wan (b. 1952), who taught in the CUHK and is still associated with the ISCS, there are three types of Sino-Christian theologians: (1) scholars in Mainland China studying Christianity (SMSCs), (2) cultural Christian studies scholars (CCSSs), and (3) Christian scholars (CSs).²⁶³ As Wan indicates, the first category, SMSCs, refers to those who position themselves as outsiders while studying Christianity. The second category, CCSSs, consists of those who have a tendency to believe in Christ and whose worldviews have been highly influenced by Christianity. The third group, CSs, attempts to construct a theological dialogue through the Christ event in order to build its Christian identity. As suggested in the title, the second and third categories not only consist of scholars in Mainland China, but many also include those in Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the Chinese diaspora all over the world. This reflects Wan's intention to define Sino-Christian theology as a diverse platform for different voices, and not merely to develop a 'China's theology' (*Zhongguo de shenxue*).²⁶⁴ Regarding the third category, most of the CSs treat the God of Christianity as an 'objectival subject' (*you qingyi de tazhe*) whom they have personally encountered through prayer and/or self-transcendental experiences,²⁶⁵ and thus have an emotional connection with God the

²⁶³ Milton Wan, 'Hanyu shenxue de gonggongxing: Lun shenxue yanjiu yu jidu zongjiao jingyan' [The Publicness of Sino-Christian Theology: A Discussion of Theological Study and the Experience of Christianity], *Jidu zongjiao yanjiu* [Study of Christianity] 11 (2008): 49. Note that another scholar in Sino-Christian theology, He Guanghu, also outlined the three generations of scholars in Chinese Christianity since the 1950s. However, his focus is broadly on the field of Chinese Christianity, and not merely on Sino-Christian theology. For details, see He Guanghu, 'Trends of Chinese Scholars in Christian Studies in the Turn of the Twentieth and Twenty-First Century', *Daofeng: Jidujiao wenhua pinglun* [Logos and Pneuma: Chinese Journal of Theology] 29 (2008): 68–69.

²⁶⁴ Wan, 'Hanyu shenxue de gonggongxing', 49–50.

²⁶⁵ For Hans Joas, Professor of Sociology at the University of Chicago, the experiences of self-transcendence means 'experiences in which a person transcends herself, but not, at least not immediately, in the sense of moral achievements but rather of being pulled beyond the boundaries of one's self, being captivated by something outside

subject.²⁶⁶ Most of the scholars discussed in this chapter can be categorised as CSs, though they do not explicitly express their faith in their writings. Nonetheless, we can determine that it is due to their belief that they pursue academic research and are willing to construct Sino-Christian theology through a humanistic lens.

To distinguish a further-developed approach in this chapter by the CSs, we should first understand the methodology proposed by the CCSS Liu Xiaofeng (b. 1956), one of the pioneers of Sino-Christian theology and a professor at the School of Liberal Arts at the Renmin University of China (RUC). For Liu, the conflict between Eastern and Western culture has been overlaid in the past, as it also appeared in the New Testament, when Christianity was introduced to Gentiles who had a different culture from Jews.²⁶⁷ As a CCSS, he defends CCSSs by suggesting that ‘their individual faith could be transformed by knowledge as a person with culture’ (*you geti xinyang zhuanbian de zhishi wenhuaren*) and that Christian identity should not be defined by membership in churches, but by one’s individual faith.²⁶⁸ Here, he does not perceive cultural conflict as a very unique situation in China, considering Sino-culture as encountering the same situation as other Western cultures in history.²⁶⁹ Despite his role as a pioneer in this subject, his generalising claim has been criticised by the later generation of scholars in Sino-Christian theology: the CSs.

of myself, a relaxation of or liberation from one’s fixation on oneself.’ See Hans Joas, *Do We Need Religion? On the Experience of Self-transcendence* (London: Routledge, 2016), 7.

²⁶⁶ Wan, ‘Hanyu shenxue de gonggongxing’, 56–57. Note that the English translation of ‘*you qingyi de tazhe*’ is provided by Wan himself. For the details of the term ‘objectual subject’, see Milton Wan, *Jidujiao yu Zhongguo de xiandaihua: Chaoyue jingyan yu shenxing de xunsuo* [Christianity and Chinese Modernity: Transcending Experience and the Quest for Spirituality] (Hong Kong: Christian Excellence Mission, 2001), 84–86.

²⁶⁷ Liu Xiaofeng, ‘Xiandai yu jing zhong de hanyu jidu shenxue’ [Sino-Christian Theology in the Modern Context], *Daofeng: Jidujiao wenhua pinglun* [Logos and Pneuma: Chinese Journal of Theology] 2 (Spring 1995): 16.

²⁶⁸ Liu, ‘Xiandai yu jing zhong de hanyu jidu shenxue’, 27–28; Liu Xiaofeng, *Geti xinyang yu wenhua lilun* [Individual Faith and Cultural Theory] (Sichuan: Sichuan People’s Publisher, 1997).

²⁶⁹ Liu Xiaofeng, *Sino-Theology and the Philosophy of History: A Collection of Essays by Liu Xiaofeng*, ed. Leopold Leeb (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

Unlike Liu Xiaofeng who denies the elements of contextual theology in Sino-Christian theology,²⁷⁰ Lai—who declares himself a Protestant—states that contextualisation of Sino-Christian theology is present and necessary for the Chinese people because it assists them in defending Christianity as a localised religion, helping them to reflect upon their religious experience that may conflict with their own culture.²⁷¹ Furthermore, Liu’s approach unearths the dilemma of applying Sino-Christian theology in the Chinese context: on the one hand, Liu tried to develop theology in the Sinosphere, while on the other hand, he was dissatisfied with the Chinese tradition and hoped to reconstruct it out of its own context.²⁷² As we progress through Lai’s public theology, as well as that of the other CSs, we will examine how Lai handles this dilemma.

Another important CS who has influenced the development of Sino-Christian theology is He Guanghu (b. 1950), Emeritus Professor at the RUC, who illustrates a different perspective from Liu because of his Christian faith. In contrast to Liu, He argues that Sino-Christian theology is contextual, suggesting that such contextualisation of theology helps to improve the living conditions of those outside academia, and thus to make Sino-Christian theology more relatable than Liu’s argues. He perceives that the marginalisation of Sino-Christian theology is due to the overemphasis on ancient classics that may lead to ignoring some important social issues in contemporary Mainland China nowadays. Thus, employing Calvin’s theory, he suggests

²⁷⁰ Liu Xiaofeng, ‘Sino-Christian Theology in the Modern Context’, *Sino-Christian Studies in China*, ed. Yang Huilin and Daniel H. N. Yeung (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006), 52; Liu, *Sino-Theology and the Philosophy of History*, 81.

²⁷¹ Lai Pan-chiu, ‘Hanyu shenxue de leixing yu fazhan luxiang’ [The Types and Development of Sino-Christian Theology], *Institute of Sino-Christian Studies*, accessed 15 February 2019, <http://www.iscs.org.hk/Common/Reader/News/ShowNews.jsp?Nid=75&Pid=3&Version=0&Cid=191&Charset=big5hkscs>.

²⁷² Lai Pan-chiu and Jason Lam, ‘Retrospect and Prospect of Sino-Christian Theology: An Introduction’, in *Sino-Christian Theology: A Theological Qua Cultural Movement in Contemporary China* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2010), 9.

that theology should be accommodating, which means that it should use a language that can be understood by its audience.²⁷³ This is an important point when we discuss public theology among the scholars in Sino-Christian theology, in terms of how the two correlate to each other.

Although He has not written articles specifically on public theology, it is observable that he tends to bring Sino-Christian theology into the public discourse.

As Lai indicates, many church leaders have been suspicious of the theories developed by the scholars in Sino-Christian theology,²⁷⁴ because most of these scholars did not have comprehensive training in biblical studies, and many did not declare themselves as Christians. Thus, the former may question if the latter's theories are theological at all because they perceive them as not being based on the Bible.²⁷⁵ Nonetheless, as illustrated by the previous categorisation, scholars in the Sino-Christian theology, especially the third generation, usually identify themselves as CS. Most of the public theologians discussed in this chapter belong to churches in Hong Kong, although their voices are most active in academia.

Lai defends scholars in Sino-Christian theology, despite church leaders' negative impression, by asserting that it can be an approach for Christian apologetics, because many scholars in Sino-Christian theology (for example, Liu Xiaofeng) analysed theology from a humanistic angle that can be understood by the general public despite a lack of personal belief.²⁷⁶ For Lai, the problem with having public theology developed by the church is that they tend to speak for believers only, rather than being accessible to the wider public. As I explore Lai's

²⁷³ He Guanghu, 'Hanyu shenxue de fangfa yu jinlu' [The Methods and Approaches of Sino-Christian Theology], *Regent Chinese Journal* 3 (1996):16–24.

²⁷⁴ For the details of the debates on the legitimacy of cultural Christians, see Institute of Sino-Christian Studies (ed.), *Cultural Christians: Phenomenon and Argument* (Hong Kong: Logos and Pneuma Press, 1997).

²⁷⁵ Lai and Lam, 'Retrospect and Prospect of Sino-Christian Theology', 3.

²⁷⁶ Lai, 'Hanyu shenxue de leixing yu fazhan luxiang'.

public theology in the second half of this chapter, I will further elaborate Lai's arguments as well as the viewpoints from other scholars in Sino-Christian theology regarding this dilemma.

Lai's Background

The main representative examined in this chapter, Lai Pan-chiu, is a professor at the Department of Cultural and Religious Studies at the CUHK, where he has taught since 1996. Succeeding Ying Fuk-tsang, Lai has served as the Interim Dean of Faculty of Arts at the Chinese University of Hong Kong since August 2018. Lai gained his Bachelor of Art in Religious Studies and Master of Divinity at the CUHK in 1985 and 1987 respectively, then earned his PhD in Systematic Theology at King's College London in 1991. After completing his PhD, he taught at Middlesex University and served as a pastor of Rhenish Church (UK). He is currently an advisor to the Ma On Shan Ling Liang Church.²⁷⁷ He is the editor-in-chief of *Ching Feng: A Journal on Christianity and Chinese Religion and Culture*, and is also on the editorial board of a number of international journals.²⁷⁸ On top of being the academic director of ISCS, he was also the Associate Director of the Centre for the Study of Religion and Chinese Society at the Divinity School of Chung Chi College, CUHK, and is the founding director of several research centres, such as Centre for the Study of Humanities Buddhism, Centre for Catholic Studies, and Centre for the Study of Islamic Culture.²⁷⁹ In light of his academic responsibilities, it is unsurprising that

²⁷⁷ Ling Liang Church is a denomination founded by Zhao Shiguang (1908–1973), a Shanghainese pastor who fled to Hong Kong after 1949, the year of the establishment of the PRC. According to its website, it now has around 345 branches all over the world. For details, see Jin Lizheng, 'Zhao Shiguang', *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Christianity*, accessed 29 April 2019, <https://web.archive.org/web/20111217142749/http://www.bdcconline.net/zh-hant/stories/by-person/z/zhao-shiguang.php>.

²⁷⁸ Lai Pan-chiu, 'Chinese Exploration of Orthodox Theology: A Critical Review', *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* (2018): 17.

²⁷⁹ 'Lai, Pan Chiu'.

his research interests lie in interreligiophilosophical dialogue, especially the intersection between Christianity and East Asian religiophilosophies, such as Buddhism and Confucianism.

Among the numerous researchers associated with the ISCS who have written articles on the public engagement of Sino-Christian theology, Lai is one of the most prolific scholars especially in his work on public theology. Hence, this chapter will focus on Lai as a key figure in order to narrate the current dialogue on public theology and Sino-Christian theology in Hong Kong. I will also discuss several other scholars who have researched and published on this topic, such as Jason Lam and Xie Zhibin.

Unlike the theologians in the HKSKH mentioned in Chapter 2, this group of scholars is not as engaged in developing relationships with government officials, nor are they as active in churches, as the evangelical theologians discussed in Chapter 4. However, there is a strong sense of Christian faith in their words, which is apparent when analysing the discourse in their writings. Although Wan's article on the categorisation of Sino-Christian theology was published in 2008, perhaps we can still group these theologians, whose writings were mostly published in the 2010s, as CS.

Public Dialogue in Sino-Christian Theology

As my intention is to show how Sino-Christian theology affects public theology both within and outside the church, the order of the themes in this section will start with the issues that are of most concern outside the church and proceed to questions of how churches perceive this public theology to be expressed within the Christian community. Thus, the four themes highlighted in this section are: (1) Hong Kong's identity issue and its relation to patriotism, (2) the concept of harmony in Lai's public theology, (3) interreligiophilosophical dialogue, and (4)

ecumenical ecclesiology. Although the third and fourth points look similar, I want to clarify that the third topic focuses on public theology in relation to other Chinese religions and philosophies, such as Confucianism, while the latter examines how Protestant public theology may be developed in an ecumenical environment.

Patriotism: The Identity of Hong Kongese as Chinese Citizens

Although Lai's writings concern the identity issues of Hong Kongese, as well as their relation with their motherland, he does not express it as explicitly as the Anglican theologians in Hong Kong do. In response to the increasing debates in Hong Kong society regarding the type of patriotism Hong Kongese should embrace or express, Lai highlights the kind of patriotism usually found in religious organisations in Mainland China, and its different understanding among Hong Kongese.²⁸⁰

In his chapter 'Christianity and Patriotism: A Contextual, Interdisciplinary Reflection of a Hong Kong Christian', originally presented at the conference of the Society of Chinese Theologians held at Hong Kong Seminary in 2014, he argued that patriotism is not a prerequisite for Hong Kongese or for any citizens on earth, because the scripture does not encourage any form of love for a specific nation or ethnicity; instead, the ultimate concern for all believers should point to the kingdom of God.²⁸¹ For many Hong Kongese, their sense of nationalism or patriotism is not very strong,²⁸² as they may have lived in other countries and often hold multiple

²⁸⁰ Lai has discussed patriotism through the perspectives of evolution and of cultural studies; this analysis will only address the latter.

²⁸¹ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 295.

²⁸² Note that Lai also helpfully suggests that nationalism and patriotism are different and thus do not have a direct linkage to ethnicity. Strictly speaking, Mainland China consists of fifty-six ethnicity groups, and not merely Han Chinese. The patriotism proposed by the Communist Party of China (CPC) is not about the love of Han Chinese; instead, it encourages its citizens to love their country due to their nationality. In contrast, Lai defines patriotism as a type of nationalism with sentiment—that is, a devotion to the nation or a cultural attachment to one's

passports. Their identity is not necessarily bound by their city of residence or country of origin. He points out that, as a result of globalisation, the concept of national identity will not be as strong as in the last few centuries because it is determined not only by birthplace but by personal conviction. Hence, the concept of diaspora is more important in shaping discussions on identity in the contemporary era—not only for Hong Kongese and Chinese, but also for every citizen on earth.²⁸³ Support for this can be drawn from the Christians' testimony in the New Testament because, as they were ruled by the Roman Empire, the identity of most Christians at the time, especially those of Jewish background, was not attached to the national identity of a country. For them, their identity was more like that of a sojourner, and they chose to obey the rules of the countries they lived in as Christian citizens.²⁸⁴ While we will further discuss Stanley Hauerwas's concept of God's kingdom in Chapter 5; however, it is noteworthy that Lai developed the concept of resident aliens in Hauerwas and William Willimon's book of the same name, to illustrate Hauerwas's idea that it is not necessary for Christians to follow a single leader or a single party.²⁸⁵ This may shed light on how we perceive Hong Kong identity in regards to the controversy of patriotism.

Lai and Ho Hing-cheong's discussion on Xie Fuya (1892–1991, also known as N.Z. Zia), an intellectual who fled to Hong Kong after the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949,²⁸⁶ exemplifies how they believe academics should position themselves in the

home country, despite the different interpretations due to the context of languages, regions, or philosophies. See Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 268–269.

²⁸³ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 278–279.

²⁸⁴ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 292–294.

²⁸⁵ In short, 'resident aliens' is a term in the United States that defines someone who has the right to live in the United States and pay its taxes, but is not a citizen yet. Hauerwas and Willimon have further developed the term to illustrate the otherworldliness of Christians. See Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1989).

²⁸⁶ Ho Hing-cheong and Lai Pan-chiu, 'A Chinese Christian Intellectual in Diaspora: A Case Study of Xie Fuya', *Monumenta Serica* 56 (2008): 427–429.

dialogue of public theology. As Ho and Lai indicate, Xie's active role in academia shows that intellectuals in the 1960s were able to help construct theology through their personal conviction.²⁸⁷ Not only did Xie actively engage in discussions relating to social and political situations in Mainland China,²⁸⁸ but he also showed concern for such issues in Hong Kong, especially in establishing new education institutes to promote liberal education.²⁸⁹ His active involvement demonstrates that one does not have to be bound by a specific national or regional identity to improve society; rather, someone can begin wherever they are and use their position to improve the social and political conditions they are passionate about. His physical location did not prevent him from showing concern for Mainland China, nor did he stop trying to improve Hong Kong society even though he was not a Hong Kong citizen by birth. His action testifies that Christian intellectuals should be involved in social and political matters, and criticise the government, if necessary. As Xie has demonstrated, no government is perfect; thus, Christians ought to consider it their responsibility to re-evaluate the government on a regular basis, irrespective of their physical location or place of residence. Similar to Xie, Lai also reflects the Hong Kong context as a Christian intellectual and states that, despite the wrongdoing on the part of the nation, Christians should demonstrate their accepting love for it.²⁹⁰

For Lai, the role of the government is not God-given—it is merely a product of human beings. Similar to Karl Barth (1886–1968), who considered the government to be a product of human beings,²⁹¹ Lai disagrees with perceiving the government as a product of God's consecration. With Barth's support, he argues that it is unnecessary to love the government,

²⁸⁷ Ho and Lai, 'A Chinese Christian Intellectual in Diaspora', 435.

²⁸⁸ Ho and Lai, 'A Chinese Christian Intellectual in Diaspora', 433–436.

²⁸⁹ Ho and Lai, 'A Chinese Christian Intellectual in Diaspora', 430–432.

²⁹⁰ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 301.

²⁹¹ Karl Barth, *Against the Stream, Shorter Post-War Writings, 1946–1952*, ed. Ronald Gregor Smith, trans. E.M. Delacour and Stanley Godman (London: SCM, 1954), 95.

because a just government should only request simplicity, responsibility, and tenacity from its citizens, and should not impose certain emotions upon them—that is, patriotism.²⁹²

One might interpret this as Lai's attempt to respond to the moral and national education controversy in 2012. Instead of denying the necessity of national education or the negative perception of the programme proposed by the Education Bureau,²⁹³ Lai comments that churches, as a major body for education provision in Hong Kong, should consider creating a type of national education that fulfils the goal of Christian education: to enrich and nurture student life. This type of national education should help students to think critically—not only avoiding the narrow definition of patriotism, but also integrating different values and responsibilities that go beyond nationalism. As a result, a type of transnational altruism could be developed in the heart of the next generation.²⁹⁴ Lai argues that the aim of education nowadays should be to create an international worldview,²⁹⁵ citing Walter Wink in saying, 'we should be international and transitional, but not antinational.'²⁹⁶ Although patriotism or nationalism can be ideologies through which students interact with their motherland, schools in Hong Kong should provide a well-rounded education for them to understand their country from different perspectives.

If we apply this logic to the heated debate in Hong Kong—localism, strictly speaking—Lai's argument implies that it is unnecessary to choose between the love of one's city and the love of one's nation because a Christian's ultimate concern should point to the kingdom of God. Patriotism or nationalism is not as important for Christian citizens, because they perceive their

²⁹² Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 325–327.

²⁹³ As discussed in Chapter 2, this is a programme proposed by the Education Bureau to raise awareness of the concept of nationalism. However, it was criticised as too patriotic, and most feared that the PRC might attempt to disseminate communist ideas through education. For details, see Chapter 2, 69–70.

²⁹⁴ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 309.

²⁹⁵ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 301.

²⁹⁶ Walter Wink, 'Angels of the Nations?', in *God and Country? Diverse Perspectives on Christianity and Patriotism*, ed. Michael G. Long and Tracy Wenger Sadd (New York: Palgrave, 2008), 22.

identity as citizens of God's kingdom. The contextual theology Lai proposes,²⁹⁷ despite a lack of postcolonial terminology, affirms the hybrid identity Hong Kong Christians may have—Christian as the major identity and nationality as the minor one. This is perhaps more suitable than Paul Kwong's model, which does not consider the dual nationalities of Hong Kongese. As discussed in Chapter 2, Kwong suggests that, in a rapidly changing world, identity is fluid and constantly shifting. Perhaps Lai's transnational worldview may help Hong Kongese to overcome their doubts about patriotism and to affirm their identity as members of the church and the kingdom of God. As a result, Hong Kong could be transformed into a more harmonious society, in spite of the different perspectives citizens may have of Mainland China and/or Hong Kong.

Harmony in Confucian-Christian Perspective

Although one may think that Confucianism, as a religiophilosophy developed in the Eastern Zhou era (770–256 BCE), is irrelevant today, Lai suggests that the Confucian concept of harmony was constructed as a reaction to the chaotic sociopolitical situation of that period. The elites of that era were eager to build an ethical system that could end the social disorder. Thus, the harmony stressed in Confucianism is not as remote as one may think, since society can still be in chaos, even after 2000 years.²⁹⁸

For Lai, 'harmony in diversity' (*he er butong*) is a major theme in Confucianism. Similar to Kwong's understanding discussed in Chapter 2, 'the true or valuable harmony should include and preserve diversity instead of homogeneity. It respects diversity and does not disregard

²⁹⁷ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 301.

²⁹⁸ Lai Pan-chiu, 'Chinese Perspectives on Dialogue in a World of Conflict and Violence', paper presented at *The 4th SRP Distinguished Lecture and Symposium*, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, 22 September 2018, <https://www.rsis.edu.sg/keynote-lecture-by-professor-lai-pan-chiu-dean-of-arts-faculty-the-chinese-university-of-hong-kong-at-the-4th-srp-distinguished-lecture-and-symposium/>.

diversity or suppresses the divergent voices'.²⁹⁹ However, diverging from Kwong, Lai adds that, since social harmony is not equivalent to uniformity in opinion, a certain tension is expected in this kind of harmony.

The difficulty in employing a Confucian concept of harmony in a diversified society is that, while one may assume those who write about this topic agree with the ideas of harmony in diversity, we may not expect that all citizens will act according to the Confucian concept of 'noble persons' (*junzi*), nor assume they will exert peace and harmony in their relationships, because they may have different religiophilosophical beliefs. Lai argues that such an assumption is too idealistic and unnecessary.³⁰⁰

In connecting Confucian ideas with Christianity, Lai suggests that in Confucianism, intercultural dialogue—including interreligiophilosophical dialogue—is expected because Confucianism emphasises respect for other human beings. Since culture is diversified and relational, to be a noble person, one should have empathy towards others, even if they have different religious beliefs or political standpoints. This is in keeping with the teaching of the gospel that entreats believers to 'do to others as you would have them do to you' (Matthew 7:12, NRSV). Extending this concept, Lai comments that since the Israelites were strangers in a strange land where they experienced hardship, Christians who are taught with the Hebrew Scriptures should also learn to be sympathetic to others, just as their ancestors encountered and expected to be treated fairly (Deuteronomy 24:14–22).³⁰¹ In light of this kind of respect toward others, we can find a common ground between Confucianism and Christianity upon which to

²⁹⁹ Lai, 'Chinese Perspectives on Dialogue in a World of Conflict and Violence'.

³⁰⁰ Lai, 'Chinese Perspectives on Dialogue in a World of Conflict and Violence'.

³⁰¹ Lai, 'Chinese Perspectives on Dialogue in a World of Conflict and Violence'.

construct public theology despite there being different religiophilosophical beliefs within Hong Kong society.

Another important Confucian idea that Lai has explored is *Zhongyong*. Translated as ‘the middle commonplace’ by Lai and ‘the middle way’ by Kwong, *Zhongyong* does not necessarily mean ‘the middle points of two poles’.³⁰² Instead, it refers to ‘[taking] an appropriate position and [avoiding] taking extreme measures’.³⁰³ Using Confucian terms, Lai elaborates that the middle commonplace can be found through ‘[paying] special attention to interpersonal dynamics, [weighing] the possible consequences of different actions, and [striving] to maintain harmony in the social world’.³⁰⁴ This further advances Kwong’s discourse on *via media*; Kwong stresses certain aspects of the middle way in Anglicanism, but does not specify what he means by the ‘middle’ in a harmonious relationship. The discourse Lai further develops on the linkage between Confucianism and Christianity may help Christians to engage with the other parties in a pluralistic society, especially in Hong Kong where Confucianism still plays an important role.

In regard to harmony in Sino-Christian theology, Lai highlights the importance of reconciliation in the contemporary context. He suggests that it has been a main theme since the post-Cultural Revolution era, because of distrust among family members in the 1970s.³⁰⁵ At the Chinese Church international conference in Montreal, Canada in 1981, Chen Zemin (1917–2018), Vice-President of Nanjing Union Theological Seminary, suggested that liberation was, for many, an outdated word in the 1980s, in conflict with the political ideology of the time.³⁰⁶

³⁰² According to Lai, this is mistranslated due to the Western understanding of Aristotle’s ‘doctrine of the mean’. See Lai, ‘Chinese Perspectives on Dialogue in a World of Conflict and Violence’.

³⁰³ Lai, ‘Chinese Perspectives on Dialogue in a World of Conflict and Violence’.

³⁰⁴ Lai, ‘Chinese Perspectives on Dialogue in a World of Conflict and Violence’.

³⁰⁵ Lai Pan-chiu, ‘Dui hexie shehui yu ke chixu fazhan de gonggong lunshu: Yige hanyu jidujiao shenxue de huiying’ [Public Discourses on Harmonious Society and Sustainable Development: A Sino-Christian Theological Response], *Daofeng: Jidujiao wenhua pinglun* [*Logos and Pneuma: Chinese Journal of Theology*] 40 (2014): 117.

³⁰⁶ Chen Zemin, ‘Zhongguo jiaohui shenxue sixiang diandi’ [An Overview of the Theological View of Chinese Churches], *Tripod* 6 (1981): 12–14.

Therefore, Lai argues that reconciliation was essential for churches in the 1980s. This sentiment was echoed in the ‘Cosmic Christ’ concept from K.H. Ting, who attempted to respond to the sociopolitical climate using Anglican theology to argue for Christ’s role with and in the cosmos.³⁰⁷ This realisation is important for Lai because it highlights an aspect similar to the Confucian idea of harmony—it does not merely refer to the harmony within a community, but also includes harmony between individuals and the cosmos. Strictly speaking, Confucianism does not differentiate between the harmony of human beings, community, and the cosmos. This concept can be summarised in the neo-Confucian term ‘harmony in nature’ (*yu tiandi manyou chengwei yiti*), which Lai thinks can be employed in dialogue with Christian ecological theology.³⁰⁸

As an expert in ecological theology, Lai evaluates Western Christian ecological theology and comments:

It can assist the Chinese Christian churches, especially the professional theologians and church leaders, and urge them to reconsider their positions on ecological issues. It is unclear, though, as to whether, and to what extent, these academic studies of western Christian ecological theologies can represent the voices of the Chinese Christian churches in the public sphere.³⁰⁹

Since Lai based this article on the context of Mainland China, he is concerned about the fact that Mainland China is not a liberal state, and that the religious discourse therefore cannot be fully

³⁰⁷ For details, see K.H. Ting, ‘The Cosmic Christ’, in *Love Never Ends*, ed. Janice Wickeri (Nanjing: Yilin Press, 2000), 408–418; Lai, ‘Dui hexie shehui yu ke chixu fazhan de gonggong lunshu’, 116–117.

³⁰⁸ Lai Pan-chiu, ‘Jidujiao shengtai shexui he xiang rujia xue xie shenme?’ [What Can Christian Ecological Theology Learn from Confucianism?], in *Ru Ye duihua xin licheng* [A New Stage in Christian-Confucian Dialogue], ed. Lai Pan-chiu and Peter K.H. Lee (Hong Kong: Centre for the Study of Religion and Chinese Society, Chung Chi College, 2001), 68.

³⁰⁹ Lai Pan-chiu, ‘Ecological Theology as Public Theology: A Chinese Perspective’, *International Journal of Public Theology* 11, 4 (2017): 485.

expressed in the public sphere.³¹⁰ However, I perceive that it is more compatible with the Hong Kong context because environmental concerns and NGOs related to this issue are more developed in Hong Kong than in Mainland China.

Regarding the correlation of Christian ecological theology and Confucianism, Lai criticises the notion of theism, which perceives that the world is controlled entirely by God the creator. He argues that the weakness of this perspective is that human beings have no contribution to the betterment of ecosystems. Instead, Lai proposes Gordon Kaufmann's (1888–1949) idea that God, as an incarnate being on earth, intends to connect with human beings through history. Unlike the theistic standpoint that stresses God's absolute control over the creation, Kaufmann's panentheistic view emphasises God's interaction with human beings through the creation and highlights the hope of human beings on earth as well as their responsibility to the creation.³¹¹ In light of this, Lai contends that Confucianism offers a better balance in terms of the roles of God, nature, and human beings, because the three are actively maintaining the balance between each other. He also highlights the main difference between Confucianism and Christianity—namely, that the former does not have a doctrine of incarnation. However, it is the Confucian view of harmony that can best contribute to the discussion of ecology by positing that human beings are active in maintaining the balance with their surroundings. It is this active pursuit of harmony that can help society to find a balance between conflicts and diverse voices. Harmony is not passive, as one may think, but can be an active way to seek peace on earth.

³¹⁰ Lai, 'Ecological Theology as Public Theology', 486.

³¹¹ Lai, 'Jidujiao shengtai shexui he xiang rujia xue xie shenme?', 73; Gordon Kaufmann, *Theology for a Nuclear Age* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), 366.

Lai mentions several contemporary figures—such as Wang Weifan (1927–2015), Professor of Biblical Studies and Chinese Theology at Nanjing Union Theological Seminary;³¹² Arnold M.K. Yeung (1945–2002), a lecturer at the CUHK; and Liu Xiaofeng—to highlight their theology of creation and its social application in Sino-Christian theology. Wang employs *Yijing*'s (*I Ching*) concept of *sheng sheng* in stating that, since both Confucianism and Christianity perceive God to be the beginning of life, God's salvation is not only limited to Christians, but extends to all creatures in the world.³¹³ Liu, on the other hand, suggests that if we do not take the Daoist approach to be free from the pain and absurdness of the world, then we should consider the Christian attitude of bearing the cross and changing the community we are in.³¹⁴ Yeung borrows from early church fathers, such as Irenaeus (115–190) and Athanasius (296–377), to illustrate the false assumption within some in the Chinese Christian community that all creatures are controlled by Satan after the Fall, arguing that the Chinese Christian community ignores the fact that the Father our God is still the one who holds everything together. Yeung proposes a reconciliation theology for this dilemma: despite the Fall, the world can still reconcile with its creator, the Father. Yeung's argument responds to certain events concerning Hong Kong Christians, such as the Tiananmen Square Protests in 1989, wherein Hong Kong Christians were depressed by the situations in the fallen world.³¹⁵ This understanding may enrich the earlier discussion regarding patriotism because one should not assume government is consecrated by God. Instead, Christians living in a pluralistic society may still hope to reconcile with the world,

³¹² For the details of Wang's theology, see Alexander Chow, 'Wang Weifan's Cosmic Christ', *Modern Theology* 32, 3 (2015): 384–396.

³¹³ *Sheng sheng* can be translated as 'ever-generating'. For details, see Yuan Yijuan, *Shenshen shenxue: Wang Weifan shenxue sixiangyanjiu* [Theology of Ceaseless Creativity: A Study of Wang Weifan's Thoughts] (Beijing: Gold Wall Press, 2016).

³¹⁴ Liu Xiaofeng, *Zhengjiu yu xiaoyou* [Salvation and Wandering] (Shanghai: Shanghai People's Publishing, 1988).

³¹⁵ Arnold M.K. Yeung, *Zheshi tianfu shijie: Chuangzaolun chutan* [This is the Father's World: A Preliminary Exploration of the Theology of Creation] (Hong Kong: Mingfeng, 2007).

despite any wrongdoings on the part of the government or other parties. Although, of the three scholars Lai discusses, only Wang explicitly uses Confucianism in ecological theology, each attempts to employ the theology of creation as a means to engage with the public sphere, arguing that harmony within creation can be perceived as harmony within society. Although most of these scholars situated themselves in the academy and employed ecological theology which may seem detached from public theology, Lai shows that, if one considers the world created by God the Father, then ecology will not be considered distinct from daily life.

Therefore, Lai suggests that true harmony is rooted in Christ's kingship being fulfilled on earth. However, this does not exclude judgment and justice (Ezekiel 34:11–24; Matthew 25:31–46). As mentioned earlier, harmony may involve tension, especially when embracing difference of opinions in society. Learning to respect other parties is the first step to building a harmonious, yet diversified, society. Hence, harmony should be the ultimate goal for society, although one may foresee that conflict still exists before the goal is truly fulfilled.³¹⁶

Interreligiophilosophical Dialogue

As we further narrow down our topics of public theology in Sino-Christian theology, we should examine how we can find common ground with other parties who have different religiophilosophical beliefs. Thus, this section will consist of two parts concerning interreligiophilosophical dialogue: the first part will deal with the dialogue of human rights, while the second will examine ecological issues.

In terms of interreligiophilosophical dialogue, one concern, in both the East and the West, is Christianity's relationship with other religions. Is Christianity superior to other

³¹⁶ Lai, 'Dui hexie shehui yu ke chixu fazhan de gonggong lunshu', 124–125.

religiophilosophies, including Confucianism, atheism, and Buddhism? How does one's understanding affect his or her approaches to human rights issues? Lai responds to this dilemma in his chapter 'Human Rights and Christian-Confucian Dialogue'³¹⁷ by suggesting:

If the ultimate goal of establishing human rights is to improve or develop it, more than to highlight the superiority of Christianity in terms of its ideology and in relation to other religions, then Chinese Christians should reconsider the appropriateness of using a theocentric approach or emphasising the uniqueness of Christianity. Perhaps, for cultural negotiation, Christianity should stress its similarity with other [religiophilosophies] including Confucianism.³¹⁸

He also criticises the Baptist theologians Andres Tang and Freeman Huen for their ecclesiocentric theology,³¹⁹ which hinders discussions and engagement with other religious and political parties. This conversation will be further explored in Chapter 5, in the examination of the public theology of Hong Kong Hauerwasians. Considering that Lai is a specialist on interreligiophilosophical dialogue, it is not surprising that he would take the approach of listening to atheists, those outside the church, and those of other religious faiths. For Lai, there is some wisdom to be gained on the part of Christians from non-believers, especially on public issues.³²⁰ I also consider this necessary in Hong Kong, where Christians comprise only 12 per cent of the population.³²¹

³¹⁷ Note that I am using his chapter in *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue* [Sino-Christian Theology in the Public Square], instead of his journal article in *Studies in Interreligious Dialogue*, because the former is an updated version of the latter.

³¹⁸ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 260–261.

³¹⁹ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 331–333.

³²⁰ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 334.

³²¹ Research Office of the Legislative Council of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, *Religious Facilities in Hong Kong*, 8 December 2017, <https://www.legco.gov.hk/research-publications/chinese/1718fs01-religious-facilities-in-hong-kong-20171208-c.pdf>.

With regards to human rights, Lai clearly indicates that this is not an idea that exists in Chinese philosophy. Most Confucian scholars who have addressed the topic of human rights do not consider it a concept rooted in Confucianism.³²² However, Confucianism does not ignore the notion of human dignity; rather, as Lai and the Confucian scholar Liu Shu-hsien (1934–2006) both indicate, Confucianism prioritises the collectivity of Chinese society rather than Western individualism, and thus the concept of human right developed by individualism seems to be less compatible with Confucianism. Nonetheless, human rights, though originally a Western notion, can be developed using individualism as a starting point.³²³ Hence, for Lai, if we intend to engage in such discussions within Chinese societies, human rights should be seen from a collective perspective, so that sociality and human relationships are not ignored in the dialogue.³²⁴

To engage with the conversation from a Christian perspective, Lai points out that, although Confucianism does not have a strong concept of human rights, its concern for human nature can be a common ground with Christianity. One of the major doctrines of Confucianism is *ren*: a virtue involving altruism. Developing from Mencius's perspective, every human being has the consciousness of being benevolent or *ren*, irrespective of their social status, gender, or intelligence. Thus, every person, regardless of his or her nationality, is able to respect others and their needs as human beings, as this is a human instinct.³²⁵ This quality can connect Confucianism and Christianity in regards to human rights dialogue, despite the latter's emphasis

³²² This is also an argument highlighted by Sinologist Julia Ching (1934–2001); see Julia Ching, 'Human Rights: A Chinese Concept?', in *Confucianism and Human Rights*, ed. Wm. Theodore de Bary and Tu Weiming (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 67–82; Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 240–244.

³²³ Liu Shu-hsien, 'Global Ethic: A Confucian Response', in *Yes to a Global Ethic*, ed. Hans Kung (London: SCM, 1996), 219; Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 245.

³²⁴ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 247–250.

³²⁵ This is developed from Mencius's political philosophy based on the assumption that the king has the heart of *ren* and has the quality discussed here. For details, see Roger T. Ames, *Confucian Role Ethics: A Vocabulary* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 2010), 194–200; Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 256–257.

on God's attributes.³²⁶ However, Lai also notes that human rights is a topic yet to be developed in an interreligiophilosophical dialogue. He perceives a limitation in Chinese theologians' tendency to stress the superiority of Christianity over other religions, which inhibits conversations with other religious or philosophical scholars. Therefore, it is important for Chinese Christian theologians to be open to dialogue with others of different beliefs. For Lai, this is another way to realise the doctrine of *agape* in Christianity or *ren* in Confucianism.

The argument of treating religions equally in the public sphere has also been put forward by the Christian scholar Xie Zhibin, a PhD graduate of the University of Hong Kong and Assistant Professor at Shanghai Normal University. For him, in a liberal democratic society, religions should be in equal position and have the right to express public voices so that they can improve the society. In his monograph *Religious Diversity and Public Religion in China*, he suggests that religiophilosophical organisations should not be treated as a source of political rebellion, but as 'an autonomous force to public life'.³²⁷ Although religious organisations may raise criticisms against certain social policy, Xie explains that it is not necessarily equal to a revolution, which the CPC is aware of. Such criticism may allow religious organisations to bring positive contributions to society, and may eventually for the betterment of the nation. Since his model of religious liberty is based on Mainland China, I doubt that, in a strict sense, neither Hong Kong nor China can be considered a democratic society. Furthermore, his monograph was completed in 2006, when Mainland China had less strict rules on religious policy.

Based on the worldview wherein public issues can provide common ground between Christianity and other religions, Lai focuses on ecological theology research common to

³²⁶ Lai interprets Christianity as a religion that highlights the sinful nature of human beings, in contrast to the goodness of human beings as indicated by Mencius. For details, see Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 257–258.

³²⁷ Xie Zhibin, *Religious Diversity and Public Religion in China* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 102.

Buddhism, Confucianism, and Daoism, and perceives Confucianism to be the most compatible with Christianity in this respect. Firstly, the advantage of the Confucian-Christian dialogue on ecological theology is that both Confucianism and Christianity highlight the oneness in their soteriology and their theologies of creation. This type of cosmology demonstrates the creator's holy love. Secondly, Confucian-Christian cosmology offers human beings the role of created co-creator—not only expresses in Jesus Christ's divinity and humanity, but also illustrates God's immanence with the world.³²⁸ Ecological conversations tend to be dichotomised as anthropocentric or ecocentric, which Lai finds unhelpful. Lai perceives the Confucian-Christian dialogue as a third way to develop ecological ethics. Although still insufficient, especially in the Chinese Christian world, even limited conversation can help public theologians to conceptualise human participation in the world because, as created co-creators, human beings are entitled to bear God's creativity to improve the world. Thus, their love for God can be expressed through actions.

Returning to the notion of harmony, Lai prefers a Confucian definition that emphasises cultural harmony, which is constantly changing, as are theories in contemporary science. For him, due to the constantly changing nature of societal development in terms of economy and technology, it is inappropriate to adopt a Daoist concept of harmony which highlights the static elements in nature, namely, 'non-action' or 'no intervention' (*wu wei*).³²⁹ To improve society, Christian theologians should continuously engage in dialogue with different partners in society in a dynamic way, and thereby witness Christianity through these conversations.³³⁰

³²⁸ Lai, 'Dui hexie shehui yu ke chixu fazhan de gonggong lunshu', 120.

³²⁹ Lai, 'Chinese Perspectives on Dialogue in a World of Conflict and Violence'.

³³⁰ Lai, 'Dui hexie shehui yu ke chixu fazhan de gonggong lunshu', 121–125.

Towards an Ecumenical Ecclesiology among Protestant Denominations in the Public Sphere

After exploring the public theology of scholars in Sino-Christian theology on societal issues and its theological interaction with other religiophilosophies, we may then ask how public theology can be expressed in churches and how it can be understood in Protestant terms. Here I will use the term ‘ecumenical ecclesiology’ as a way to define Lai’s approach as consisting of a type of ecumenical theology that connects churches to other agencies, such as churches of different denominations or other Christian non-governmental organisations in the public sphere. Although Lai has actively held dialogue with Catholics, as well as non-Christian religionists, here I will focus exclusively on Protestant denominations.

Coming from the Hong Kong Rhenish Church, an ecumenical denomination, Lai holds an inclusivist view in that the church is not the sole agent of salvation. For Lai, the Holy Spirit also works outside churches, and the Trinitarian God can reveal Godself through other agents in the world.³³¹ This expands upon earlier discussion regarding Lam’s doubts about the term ‘ecclesiology’ because he feels it refers to a hierarchal church to which scholars in Sino-Christian theology do not belong. Ecumenical ecclesiology, in some sense, is necessary for this group of public theologians because their approach has been based on different disciplines, such as humanities and social sciences. A broad view of theology that includes different denominational backgrounds is essential for an enriched discussion, as well as to overcome the limitation of the term ‘ecclesiology’ itself, and provide a worldview that is not restrained by hierarchy.

³³¹ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 340–341.

Therefore, for Lai, public theology should be examined in the kingdom of God and not merely in churches, because God is willing to reveal Godself to all human beings, not exclusively to selected groups. Here, he uses the term ‘kingdom of God’ in a broader sense that comprises churches as well as people and organisations outside churches; the salvation of the whole world is God’s ultimate goal, and hence it should also be the goal of theological activities. Thus, a public theology expressed in a form that only supports churches would limit the conversation to believers, instead of reaching people outside churches.³³²

In some ways, Lai’s approach seems to be quite Hauerwasian. On the one hand, the church cannot impose its own values on society, echoing Hauerwas’s concept of ‘letting the church be the church and letting the world be the world’;³³³ on the other hand, Lai notes that the church is not supposed to ignore those outside churches in an attempt to maintain its purity or integrity, which is also very different from Hauerwas’s view of a church’s testimony in contrast to the world. He further criticises the Hong Kong Hauerwasians’ view that theology only serves the church, which seems to ignore God’s revelation outside the church.³³⁴ Nonetheless, he suggests that scholars in Sino-Christian theology do not necessarily need to follow the public theology of a particular Western theologian, such as Stackhouse or Hauerwas, because they are both premised upon a democratic society, which Mainland China, or even Hong Kong, is not. Since the Christian community is a minority in a society with different ideologies and religious beliefs, the church’s role, in Lai’s opinion, is to listen openly to different parties in society—not merely to accept other voices, but also to testify the churches through active listening.

³³² Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 341–342.

³³³ Stanley Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 99–100.

³³⁴ Lai, *Guangchang shang de gonggong shenxue*, 344.

With regards to methodological approaches, Jason Lam's applying Hans Frei's (1922–1988) on Sino-Christian theology may help us to construct an approach acceptable both to the church and to the scholars in Sino-Christian theology. In his typology, Frei categorises theology into five types: while type 1 represents theology as a philosophical discipline with priority over Christian self-description, type 5 demonstrates theology without employing philosophical methodology. Type 3, then, is somewhere between the two ends of the spectrum—admitting theology as an academic discipline, type 3 scholars consider Christian self-description as important and is not necessarily a philosophical discipline. Unlike type 3, type 2 affirms philosophy as a method to study theology, although its scholars also treat Christian religion seriously. Type 4, on the other hand, highlights the role of Christian self-reflection that requires specific application; and thus theology is not philosophically grounded.³³⁵

For Lam, to render Sino-Christian theology relatable in the public sphere, the most appropriate approach is the third type of Christian theology in the typology; that is, to position oneself in light of one's faith and its doctrine to communicate with others outside this faith. Instead of using a merely philosophical approach, the balance of philosophy and faith can open communication between the academy and church audience, as the latter often challenges the applicability of the public theology proposed by the scholars in Sino-Christian theology.³³⁶ This returns to the discussion of CCSS and CS at the beginning of this chapter, regarding how their Sino-Christian theology relates to the others in the public sphere. As I demonstrated, there is a tendency for scholars in Sino-Christian theology to shift their 'types of theology', in Frei's

³³⁵ For the details of this typology, see Hans W. Frei, *Types of Christian Theology* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 28–55.

³³⁶ Jason Lam, 'Hanyu jidujiao shenxue de leixing xue sikao' [A Typological Consideration of Sino-Christian Theology], *Daofeng: Jidujiao wenhua pinglun* [*Logos and Pneuma: Chinese Journal of Theology*] 23 (Fall 2005): 177–178.

language, from type 2 to 3—perhaps 4 for some scholars. This could be perceived as a welcome gesture because this approach allows laypersons in churches to be more comfortable and connected.

Another point to consider in the dialogue of ecumenical ecclesiology is that of the debate over individual faith versus public witness. For Daniel Yeung, Director of the ISCS and Xie Zhibin, the publicness of theology helps to transcend its nature of theology beyond individual salvation and ethics, extending Christian belief to social and political life.³³⁷ It is arguable whether Liu, a pioneer of Sino-Christian theology, and the group of CCSSs, do hold the belief that scholars in Sino-Christian theology are public witnesses to the Christian faith, since they probably would declare that, instead of being witnesses, they explore the Christian faith through their academic pursuits. But, after analysing the Hong Kong CSs above, one can sense the urge on their part to combine academic work with ‘witnessing’, as well as to survey public issues and their possible connections with Sino-Christian theology. In this way, the group of scholars in Sino-Christian theology collectively offer themselves as a witness of the Christian faith in the public sphere, where the church forms part of this sphere. Although people belonging to churches may not have heard of them or may not agree with their theological approaches, this does not deny the scholars’ personal convictions to express their theological understandings through (academic) work. Public theologians make theology accessible to other parties within society, regardless of their religious belief. In some ways, this fulfils Breitenberg’s definition of public theology that public theology should be accessible to all.³³⁸

³³⁷ Yang and Xie, ‘Hanyu shenxue yu gonggong kongjian’, 20.

³³⁸ E. Harold Breitenberg Jr., ‘What is Public Theology’, in *Public Theology for a Global Society: Essays in Honor of Max L. Stackhouse*, ed. Deirdre King Hainsworth and Scott Paeth (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2010), 4–5.

Conclusion

If we are to consider building a Hong Kong public theology, we should not ignore the academy as one of the major three publics, not only because it is important as an institution, but because it provides an environment for theologians to rethink the publicness of theology and avoids theology becoming a matter of individual faith. This is in keeping with the approach espoused by Lai Pan-chiu.³³⁹ Christians comprise a small percentage of the population in Hong Kong and so one may assume they exert relatively little influence on those outside the churches; as such, the academy can act as another platform upon which to develop public theology in a diverse society like that of Hong Kong.

As noted in the section on the history of Sino-Christian theology, although seminaries and churches in Hong Kong have had a high degree of freedom of speech in the past twenty years, there is still room for church theologians to learn from scholars in Sino-Christian theology. This is especially so in Mainland China, where Christianity began to be explored through humanistic angles due to governmental control of religious activities. This is not to say that Hong Kong's religious system will become assimilated into that of Mainland China, but rather that, under the atheist regime and working as a religious minority, if public theologians in Hong Kong consider engaging with people from other religious or political sectors, the academy is perhaps a good starting point to work with these groups, who may not otherwise have heard about public theology.

³³⁹ In Jason's Lam article on the development of Sino-Christian theology, he emphasises the term 'subjectivity' instead of 'individuality' to make this distinction. For details, see Lam, 'Cong hanyu shenxue jinnian guanzhu de jixiang yiti jianshi shenxue fansi he shehui fazhan de guanxi', 147–176.

The downside of doing public theology through Sino-Christian theology is that, although it can effectively reach non-Christians because those without Christian belief may find its lack of emphasis on Christian identity appealing, Protestants in Hong Kong, in general, have not heard of Sino-Christian theology. The reason for this is not only that Sino-Christian theology is not publicised enough, but that the language used is obscure and difficult for the general public to understand, as the Sinosphere may be unfamiliar with theological and philosophical language used by scholars.³⁴⁰ This seems to violate the principle that theology in the public sphere should be accessible to those within and outside churches. In recent years, scholars in Sino-Christian theology, such as Jason Lam, have started to give talks on public theology as a result of heated debate regarding the Umbrella Movement among Hong Kong Christians.³⁴¹ Although accessibility is gradually improving for this public—in terms of media and knowledge exchange—scholars in Sino-Christian theology have yet to make the theology even more accessible. Perhaps they could learn from the groups of theologians mentioned in Chapter 2 (Anglicans) and Chapter 4 (evangelical theologians), who communicate to others in the public sphere with a more accessible language.

The previous section on ecumenical ecclesiology may already have raised doubts for some readers as to how evangelical theologians may construct public theology, when they tend to develop public theology within and by the church. The following chapter will further explore

³⁴⁰ Jason Lam, 'Hanyu shenxue zai gonggong lingyu zhong di lunshu jinlu—dui Habeimasi sixiang de yizhong fansi xing nuoyong' [The Approach of Sino-Christian Theology in the Public Realm: A Reflection and Appropriation of Habermas], *Habeimasi yu hanyu shenxue [Jürgen Habermas and Sino-Christian Theology]*, ed. Zhang Qingxiong and Jason Lam (Hong Kong: Logos and Pneuma Press, 2007), 340.

³⁴¹ Note that the talk is more about Christian engagement with the public and not specifically about Sino-Christian theology. For details, see Ho Ka-hang, 'Jidutu gai ruhe huiying xinshidai? Linzichun: Shangzhu jinri reng huzhao ren xuanjiang anwei de hua' [How Do Christians Respond to the New Era? Jason Lam: God Still Calls People to Speak Comforting Words Today], *Shidai luntan [Christian Times]*, 22 February 2018, <https://bit.ly/3aiyHtV>.

such issues and discuss how evangelical theologians project their voices to their public—churches.

CHAPTER 4

Public Theology of Evangelical Theologians: Kwok Wai-luen

Public theology is ... confessional and evangelical. It has a gospel to share, good news to proclaim. Public theology attends to the Bible and the tradition of faith at the same time as it attempts to discern the signs of the times and understand what is going on in the light of the gospel.

—Duncan B. Forrester, 2000³⁴²

Evangelical communities in Hong Kong have historically tended to be passive with regards to the church's engagement with the public, due to the concern that these engagements may be 'too political', and thereby they may violate the principle of separation of church and state. Their attitude has evidently changed since the Umbrella Movement, as many Christian leaders have been actively involved in the protest; however, it is noteworthy that in the post-1997 era, evangelical theologians have been struggling to project their theological voices in the public sphere. This is mainly the result of the changing relationship between church and state—from the relations between the church and the colonial government, to those between the church and the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) as well as the People's Republic of China (PRC).

In this chapter, our central figure of study will be Kwok Wai-luen, Associate Professor in the Department of Religion and Philosophy at the Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU), as the

³⁴² Duncan B. Forrester, *Truthful Action* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 127–128.

major figure to study. Coming from the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA)—one of the ‘three [evangelical] denominations’ (*san zong*),³⁴³ alongside the Baptist Convention of Hong Kong (BCHK), and the Evangelical Free Church of China (EFCC)³⁴⁴—he takes an approach both as a theologian and as a pastoral leader that demonstrates how the stream of Hong Kong evangelical churches attempts to develop a public theology. Setting aside the complexity and conflict within the community of evangelical theologians, this chapter intends to give a broad picture of the public voice of this group of theologians and pastoral leaders, and how it may be different from the public voice of Anglican theologians and scholars in Sino-Christian theology discussed in the previous two chapters. Moreover, while skimming through this chapter, one may notice that the public theology for this group is constructed not merely by church leaders, but also by leaders of the Christian social movement organisations (SMOs),³⁴⁵ which will be elaborated towards the end.

Furthermore, although this chapter focuses on evangelical theologians, it is noteworthy that the distinction between evangelical and ecumenical theologians in Hong Kong is not as clear-cut as one might assume. For example, as Kwok indicates, from the 1990s onwards, those who graduated from evangelical seminaries might work at ecumenical churches, while evangelical seminaries might employ lecturers with ecumenical educational backgrounds.³⁴⁶ In contrast to

³⁴³ This is an abbreviation for the three major evangelical denominations in Hong Kong.

³⁴⁴ While a brief history of these three denominations will be outlined in the next section, we should note that the EFCC, despite a name that may imply church activities in Mainland China, mainly operates in Hong Kong nowadays. For details, see ‘Zai Gang shigong fazhan daishi nianbiao’ [The Calendar of the Development of Ministries in Hong Kong], Evangelical Free Church of China, accessed 27 May 2019, https://www.efcc.org.hk/pages/history_hk.

³⁴⁵ In short, social movement organisations, as defined by American sociologist John Lofland (b. 1936), are ‘associations of persons making idealistic and moralistic claims about how human personal or group life ought to be organized that, *at the time of their claims-making*, are marginal to or excluded from mainstream society—the then dominant constructions of what is realistic, reasonable, and moral’. For details, see John Lofland, *Social Movement Organizations: Guide to Research on Insurgent Realities* (New Brunswick: Aldine Transaction, 2006), 2–3.

³⁴⁶ Kwok Wai-luen, *Zibao yu guanhuai: Xianggang jiaohui de shehui he zhengzhi canyu* [Self-Defence or Social Concern? The Social and Political Participation of Hong Kong Church] (Hong Kong: Chinese Alliance Press, 2014), 9–10.

this blurred boundary, Kwok is a suitable figure for our case study because his denominational and educational background is clearly evangelical, although he partners with different ecumenical churches or theologians to express his social concerns. As briefly discussed in the Introduction, as evangelical leaders tend to be silent in terms of political issues, Kwok is one of the few ones who has produced a monograph on social and political issues. An alternative voice of evangelicals can be found in the Hong Kong Hauerwasians—a group of Baptist theologians who are labelled by others for their perspective of separation of church and state—who will be analysed in Chapter 5.

The first half of this chapter will begin with a section on the definition of the public for evangelical theologians, which I will argue is the church. The next section will narrate the historical background of evangelical theologians, mainly focusing on how it may shape their public dialogue in the post-1997 era. This will be followed by a brief description of Kwok's background to highlight how his experience may affect his public theology. The second half of this chapter will be devoted to Kwok's theology, focusing on three topics: (1) Protestant identity in light of the tension between the church and state, (2) social and political involvement of the evangelical communities, and (3) Mission Citizens—the movement that Kwok and other Protestant leaders initiated after the Umbrella Movement.

The primary sources for this chapter consist of Kwok's monographs, *Zibao yu guanhuai: Xianggang jiaohui de shehui he zhengzhi canyu* [*Self-Defence or Social Concern? The Social and Political Participation of Hong Kong Church*] and *Shijia yu hongqi: Dangdai Zhongguo zhengjiao guanxi lunji* [*The Cross and the Red Flag: On Contemporary Church-State Relations in China*] as well as his other journal articles and conference papers, both in Chinese and in English.

The Public for Evangelical Theologians: The Church

In contrast to the previous two groups we have studied, Anglican theologians and scholars in Sino-Christian theology, who construct their public theologies in light of their roles with society and in the academy, this section seeks to explore and develop my argument on how evangelical theologians construct their public theologies in and from the church. Here, I should clarify that I do not intend to claim that evangelical theologians are the only group that speaks about public theology in the church—they are not, as Anglican theologians and scholars in Sino-Christian theology also sometimes engage with the public theologically in the church. However, it is the evangelicals who are most active and determined to develop public theology from and for the church.³⁴⁷ Bearing this in mind, this section will define the term ‘evangelical’ as well as the term ‘church’ in the Hong Kong context because, in some aspects, the public theologies of the evangelicals are shaped by these definitions. Moreover, the concept of, and perhaps the confusion around, the separation of church and state will be explored here in order to illustrate how the church, as the public among evangelical theologians, differentiates itself from the other two publics, namely the state and the academy.

As per Kwok, evangelicalism does not have a clear definition in Hong Kong. The most distinctive characteristic of evangelicalism in Hong Kong has historically been its division with ecumenism, at least during the 1970s. However, this kind of boundary between evangelical and ecumenical churches has nowadays become blurred, whereby both evangelically minded and ecumenically minded individuals can be found in both types of churches.³⁴⁸ Nonetheless,

³⁴⁷ Here I do not mean to imply that the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui (HKSKH) does not have a church-based public theology. However, the uniqueness of the public theology of the HKSKH is due to their own view of church and state relations, which differs from that of evangelical theologians.

³⁴⁸ Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 10–11.

generally speaking, *san zong*—the C&MA, the BCHK, and the EFCC—are usually categorised as evangelical churches, while the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui (HKSCH), the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China (HKCCCC), the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong (ELCHK), and the Methodist Church, Hong Kong (MCHK), are considered ecumenical churches.³⁴⁹

In a broad sense, according to Kwok, the church—as the public for evangelicalism in Hong Kong—consists of both Protestant institutional churches and Christian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that provide social services and/or perform evangelistic activities.³⁵⁰ For the purposes of his book, whose main audience is Protestants, he does not include much discussion about Catholicism in Hong Kong. However, in a strict sense, the term ‘church’ should also include Catholic churches, although, as I stated in the Introduction, this will not be the major religious group examined in the thesis.

As Hong Kong historians Beatrice Leung and Chan Shun-hing have commented, the separation of church and state was, strictly speaking, a concept derived from the laws of the United States.³⁵¹ This should not be surprising, though, since Protestantism in Hong Kong has been hugely influenced by American missionaries, who, along with their British counterparts and those from other countries, planted seeds there in the mid-twentieth century when it was still a small fisherman’s village.³⁵² While evangelical denominations, such as the C&MA, the BCHK, and the EFCC, were mostly established by American missionaries, emphasising separation of church and state, most ecumenical denominations, such as the HKSCH, the HKCCCC, the

³⁴⁹ Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 9–10.

³⁵⁰ Some evangelicals leaning to the fundamentalist side may only accept local churches as ‘the real church’, excluding Christian NGOs. For details, see Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 137–138.

³⁵¹ Beatrice Leung and Chan Shun-hing, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong, 1950–2000* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 11.

³⁵² Lau Yuet-shing, *Xianggang jidujiaohui shi* [Hong Kong Protestant Church History] (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Baptist Church, 1996), 1–3.

ELCHK, and the MCHK, are of European origins, and especially from the United Kingdom. It is noteworthy that the British influence on the concept of church and state is evident in the cooperation model of churches and the government in regards to education and social services, as discussed in Chapter 2.³⁵³ Despite most evangelical leaders' claims of respecting the separation of church and state, most Protestant churches do not strictly apply the principle of such a separation at their operation level.

To further deconstruct the concept of separation of church and state in Hong Kong, we turn now the analysis by the Christian Sentinels for Hong Kong (*Jidutu Xianggang shouwang she*; abbreviated as the CSHK), established in 1985, one year after the confirmation of the Sino-British Joint Declaration.³⁵⁴ As an SMO composed of Protestant leaders tasked with responding to the matters of the Handover during the 1980s, the CSHK categorised the ideas of separation of church and state into four levels: (1) politics and religion, (2) politics and church, (3) state and religion, and (4) state and church. For the CSHK, the concept of separation of church and state refers to separation in terms of the power relations developed from bureaucracy, and not to the separation of religion and politics, or of the church and politics. According to the CSHK, at the organisational level, the church and state should be separated so the state does not intervene in the operation of the church, and vice versa. However, the church as a civil organisation has the right to participate in political activities as well as the duty to show its political concern.³⁵⁵ Thus, it is misleading to assume that the church should be separated from politics when the concept of separation of church and state mainly concerns the operation of the organisation itself.³⁵⁶

³⁵³ Leung and Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong*, 23–46.

³⁵⁴ Law Man-wai, 'Changhe zhu lang: Lun zheng tuanti de shiwei' [Long Waves: The Decline of Political Organisations], *Shidai luntan* [Christian Times], 16 June 2017, <https://bit.ly/2JXQOtC>.

³⁵⁵ This is also a point Kwok agrees with, which we will discuss in the major section on Kwok's public theologies.

³⁵⁶ The Theory Team of the Christian Sentinels for Hong Kong, 'Zhengjiao fenli: Wujie yu liqing' [The Separation of Church and State: Misconception and Clarification], *Ming Pao*, 16 February 1987.

Although the CSHK attempted to clarify this concept in 1987, for many evangelical leaders, the idea that the church should not be involved in political activities is deeply rooted in their minds, to the point where it has almost become a tradition for evangelicals not to discuss or participate in political matters. This provides context for why the Umbrella Movement would cause a heated debate among evangelicals both within and outside churches, because many Protestants may have misunderstood the concept of separation of church and state.

When discussing the nature of the public sphere, another noteworthy point is the distinctiveness of the academy in Hong Kong, especially with respect to theological education, since Kwok is situated in one of the two universities in Hong Kong that still offer theology courses. As in the United States and the United Kingdom, theology, as an academic subject, is taught in both seminaries and universities in Hong Kong. Since seminaries in Hong Kong are usually founded by particular denominations, the theologies taught at these institutions are expected to be aligned with the belief systems of those denominations. Hence, lecturers associated with seminaries are usually required to be of Christian faith. In contrast, while theology departments in universities were usually established by churches, as secular institutions, the departments employ lecturers based on their teaching and research abilities, and not necessarily based on their religious beliefs.³⁵⁷ For example, despite being established by the BCHK and with a strong history of support from Baptist missionaries,³⁵⁸ the Department of Religion and Philosophy at HKBU does not require that its theology lecturers be Baptists. Also,

³⁵⁷ For the employment laws regarding different religious beliefs, see ‘Xuexiao zai pingqin jiaoshi shi qishi butong xinyang de renshi: Lifahui wenti diluetiao (koutou dafu)’ [Discrimination against People with Different Faith During the Employment of School Teachers: Question 6 at the Legislative Council (Verbal Answers)], Education Bureau, Hong Kong Special Administration of Region, 9 October 2002, <https://www.edb.gov.hk/tc/about-edb/press/legco/replies-oral/2012/20040117106101.html>.

³⁵⁸ For details, see ‘Xianggang jinhui daxue lishi (1): Chuangxiao (1956–1960s)’ [The History of Hong Kong Baptist University (1): Establishing the University (1956–1960s)], Hong Kong Baptist University, 4 May 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3KvmMKi2rWw>; Alex Kam-moon To, ‘Lam Chi-Fung’s Transformative Role in Shaping Hong Kong Baptist Life between 1950 and 1970’ (PhD diss., Vrije University, 2018), 126–139.

due to this kind of institutional structure, lecturers may have religiophilosophical beliefs that differ from Baptist or similar theologies, and may not even be Christians. This is perhaps different from the situation in the Global North where lecturers tend to be affiliated with the denomination, even prior to applying for the job.³⁵⁹ While in Kwok's writing, there is a strong sense of Christian conviction to speak for the church, the environment in which he is situated is not necessarily Christian, nor even religious. This explains why Kwok, as a leader at the C&MA, has worked at the Chinese Graduate School of Theology co-founded by the Reformed theologian Jonathan Chao (1938–2004)³⁶⁰ and is now employed by HKBU. This phenomenon in the academy also shows the transdenominational influence it may bring to the church, which will be explored in later sections.

The Historical Background of Public Theologies among Hong Kong Evangelicals

As mentioned in Chapter 1, along with the influx of refugees to Hong Kong in the 1960s, the number of churches increased rapidly. While some may argue that the church participants were mere 'rice Christians',³⁶¹ this does not negate the fact that some indeed sought for a saviour

³⁵⁹ Similar situations apply to the Divinity School of Chung Chi College (DSCCC), CUHK, although the university itself has been founded by thirteen Protestant denominations. Despite operating under the Department of Cultural and Religious Studies, unlike HKBU, the DSCCC still operates its own Master of Divinity programme, which is accredited for ordination in ecumenical churches in Hong Kong. For details, see 'Our History', Divinity School of Chung Chi College, Chinese University of Hong Kong, accessed 29 May 2019, <https://www.theology.cuhk.edu.hk/en/about/our-history>; 'Organisation Chart', Divinity School of Chung Chi College, Chinese University of Hong Kong, accessed 29 May 2019, <https://www.theology.cuhk.edu.hk/en/about/organisation-chart>.

³⁶⁰ Alexander Chow, 'Jonathan Chao and "Return Mission": The Case of the Calvinist Revival in China', *Mission Studies* 36 (2019): 442–457.

³⁶¹ The term 'rice Christians' refers to those who convert to Christianity simply for material benefits. For details, see Jason Wordie, 'Rice Christians: Converts Who Are Devoted to Material Benefits Rather than Religious Faith', *South China Morning Post*, 25 April 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/magazines/post-magazine/short-reads/article/3007639/rice-christians-converts-who-are-devoted>; Carl T. Smith, *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2005), 182–194.

after experiencing famine and political persecution in the 1960s.³⁶² Nonetheless, the rise of refugee ministry among the evangelical churches in Hong Kong can be seen as a timely response to the crisis in Mainland China. For the purpose of this chapter, the history of the three denominations—the C&MA, the BCHK, and the EFCC—will be highlighted below.

Most of the C&MA's ministries were concentrated in South China, due to its mission policy of only establishing new ministries in areas that had not yet been reached by other missionary agencies.³⁶³ In 1949, the C&MA, similar to other missionary organisations in China, was forced to move to Hong Kong due to the change of religious policies as well as the unstable political situation after the Second Sino-Japanese War. First relocating Alliance Bible Institute (now called Alliance Bible Seminary; abbreviated as ABS) from Wuzhou, Guangxi, to Cheung Chau, Hong Kong by its headmaster William Newbern (1900–1972), the C&MA missionaries continued to educate its seminarians who moved together with the seminary. As refugees in a new city, these missionaries saw the needs of other refugees coming from all parts of China, and the C&MA established its first church in Rennie's Mill (now called Tiu Keng Leng), where the colonial government had set up temporary refugee camps.³⁶⁴ Notably, because of its history of evangelising in unreached areas, today, the ABS still emphasises the concept of 'reaching to the unreached, suffering for God, and being fierce for God' (*kaihuang, chiku, huore*), as its principle

³⁶² For example, Yang Fenggang (b. 1962) in his article about Chinese evangelicals on the East Coast of the United States, argues that the changing social and cultural factors for Chinese immigrants could be a factor for converting to evangelical Christianity. This seems to apply to refugees who moved to Hong Kong in the 1960s. See Yang Fenggang, 'Chinese Conversion to Evangelical Christianity: The Importance of Social and Cultural Contexts', *Sociology of Religion* 59, 3 (Autumn 1998): 237–257.

³⁶³ Note that the C&MA has also sent missionaries to Northern cities such as Wuhu, Beijing, and Wuchang, but the ministries did not sustain due to the antiforeign sentiment of these cities in the late nineteenth century. For details, see Philip Loh, *Xuandao yu Zhonghua: Xuandao hui zaoqi zai Hua xuanjiao shilüe* [Title in English on colophon: *Send the Doves to the Dragon: Footprints of Christian Alliance Missionaries in the Early Twentieth Century*] (Hong Kong: China Alliance Press, 1997), 41–43; Bernie A. Van De Walle, *The Heart of the Gospel: A. B. Simpson, the Fourfold Gospel, and Late Nineteenth-Century Evangelical Theology* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2009), 14–15.

³⁶⁴ Leung Ka-lun, *Huaren xuandao hui bainian shi* [A Centenary History of the Chinese C&MA] (Hong Kong: China Alliance Press, 1998), 58–82.

of evangelism. Nonetheless, every emphasis can be seen as an omission of other aspects and, according to the ABS's website, it has not clearly articulated policies for social engagement.³⁶⁵ It is not surprising, then, to see Kwok's intention to develop a public theology as a C&MA member.

The BCHK was a product of the efforts of both the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and the American Baptist Convention (ABC).³⁶⁶ Jehu Lewis Shuck (1812–1863) and his wife Henrietta Hall Shuck (1817–1844) were the first Baptist missionaries to China sent by the Triennial Convention, landing in Macau in 1836.³⁶⁷ They later moved to Hong Kong for teaching and ministries and, with the help of William Dean (1807–1895),³⁶⁸ founded the first Baptist church in Central, Hong Kong, in 1842.³⁶⁹ In 1845, while Jehu Shuck joined the Foreign Mission Board of the SBC, Dean joined the American Baptist Mission Union, Northern Baptist Convention.³⁷⁰ It should be noted that, due to the financial support from the SBC and the flourishing of the SBC's missionaries since the 1950s—at the invitation of Lam Chi-fung (1892–1971), the founder of Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary (1951) and Hong Kong Baptist College (1956; now called Hong Kong Baptist University) —there is a misconception that the BCHK was established by the SBC only.³⁷¹ Moreover, similar to the case of the HKSKH (see

³⁶⁵ 'Ben yuan tese' [Our Seminary's Characteristics], Alliance Bible Seminary, accessed 22 March 2020, <https://bit.ly/2U7tcZg>.

³⁶⁶ Note that the SBC did not exist until 1845, having split off from the Triennial Convention due to the disagreement over its pro-slavery stance; the Northern Baptist Convention, established in 1907, became the American Baptist Convention in 1950 and is now known as American Baptist Churches USA. For details, see Thomas S. Kidd and Barry Hankins, *Baptists in America: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 117–148.

³⁶⁷ To, 'Lam Chi-Fung's Transformative Role', 32; Lau Yuet-shing, *Xianggang jidujiaohui shi* [Hong Kong Protestant Church History] (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Baptist Church, 1996), 8; Lee Chi-kong, *Jidujiao yu Xianggang zaoqi shehui* [Christianity and Hong Kong Society in the Earlier Period] (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing, 2012), 14–15.

³⁶⁸ Laura Mason, 'William Dean', *Biographical Dictionary of Chinese Christianity*, accessed 22 March 2020, <https://bdcconline.net/en/stories/dean-william>.

³⁶⁹ To, 'Lam Chi-Fung's Transformative Role', 33; Lau, *Xianggang jidujiaohui shi*, 447.

³⁷⁰ To, 'Lam Chi-Fung's Transformative Role', 40.

³⁷¹ To, 'Lam Chi-Fung's Transformative Role', 140.

Chapter 2), the BCHK has also partnered with the colonial government to establish educational, medical and social services since the 1950s.³⁷² This is why, in Chapter 5, I will elaborate the dilemma Baptist theologians face due to their concern for separation of church and state, which, according to Vincent Lau, derives from the Baptist approach to this matter.³⁷³

The seed of the EFCC was first planted in 1888 by Hans J. von Qualen (Kuan Kualun), the first missionary of the Swedish American Mission to China (now called the Swedish Evangelical Free Church of the USA).³⁷⁴ The ministry of the EFCC was established in Guangzhou first, with its first church planted at Zhoutouzui, Guangzhou.³⁷⁵ From 1937 onwards, due to civil war, most ministries in the Guangdong province gradually shifted to Hong Kong. By 1949, the EFCC officially moved to Hong Kong, although their name does not emphasise their ministry only in Hong Kong, even today.³⁷⁶ As of 2018, the EFCC had sixty churches and gathering locations, with more than 30,000 attendees at Sunday Service every week.³⁷⁷

³⁷² For details, see To, 'Lam Chi-Fung's Transformative Role', 153–186.

³⁷³ Vincent Lau, 'From Periphery to Partnership: A Critical Analysis of the Relationship of Baptists in Hong Kong with the Colonial Government in the Post-World War II Era' (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2005), 304–315.

³⁷⁴ R.G. Tiedemann, *Reference Guide to Christian Missionary Societies in China: From the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Centuries* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2009), 218–219; Law Siu-chuen, 'Jidujiao bo dao hui zong hui shi lue' [A Brief History of the Evangelical Free Church of China], in *Guangzhou jidujiao gaikuang: liang Guang jin xin hui shi lue* [The Overview of Christianity in Guangzhou: A Brief History of the Baptist Churches in the Two Guang Provinces], ed. Lau Yuet-shing (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Baptist Church, 1972), 17–21.

³⁷⁵ For the details of the years and the areas in which missionaries established their ministry in China, see Siu Kwok-kin, *Jianming Xianggang jindai shi* [A Simplified Version of Hong Kong Contemporary History] (Hong Kong: Joint Publishing (Hong Kong), 2013), 159–164; Leung Wing-chuen, 'Zhongguo bo dao hui fayuan di xungen zhi lu' [A Trip of Finding the Origin of Evangelical Free Church of China], *Zhongguo jidujiao bo dao hui huo quan tang* [EFCC Woot Chuen Church], 26 October 2012, <https://bit.ly/3a8vsF3>.

³⁷⁶ Sun Xiaohui, 'Quan shi endian—Zhongguo jidujiao bo dao hui' [All by Grace—Evangelical Free Church of China], *Jidujiao zhoubao* [Christian Weekly], 24 May 2015, <http://www.christianweekly.net/2015/ta2024010.htm>.

³⁷⁷ Chu Pak-shing, 'Ying nan er shang—130 zhounian lianhe chongbai!' [Tackling Challenges—Joint Service of 130th Anniversary!], *Zhongguo jidujiao bo dao shuyuan daozen tang* [EFCC Tseung Kwan O Wendell Memorial Church], 14 October 2018, <https://www.ecwendell.org.hk/article4/3303.html>.

Kwok's Background

Despite Kwok's humility in not declaring himself a public theologian during my interview with him in February 2018,³⁷⁸ his diverse educational background shows that he has a strong interest in public theology. At the City University of Hong Kong, he completed both his Higher Diploma in Public and Social Administration, then his Master of Social Sciences in Counselling in the 1990s.³⁷⁹ As a long-term Christian who was baptised while in secondary school,³⁸⁰ he did not consider full-time ministry. Instead, he worked as a researcher and an editor at the ABS, the official seminary of the C&MA, for a number of years. He obtained his Master of Divinity in 1996 and Master of Theology (MTh) in 2001 at the ABS, and was one of the first five MTh students to choose Christianity and Chinese Culture for their major. His MTh thesis entitled 'Chinese Church Union Movement and Fundamentalism: A Case Study of Jia Yuming', was originally a research project at the China Graduate School of Theology (CGST), where he was an Assistant Research Officer.³⁸¹

Reflecting on his years of studying theology and doing research in seminaries, Kwok commented that 'the Chinese factor' was always there, despite his shift of research focus to Trinitarian theology when he pursued his PhD in theology at King's College London between 2002 and 2006.³⁸² Besides studying Chinese Christianity during his MTh years, he was an

³⁷⁸ Kwok Wai-luen, in discussion with the author, 13 February 2018.

³⁷⁹ 'Associate Professor: Dr. Kwok, Wai Luen', Hong Kong Baptist University, accessed 29 April 2019, http://rel.hkbu.edu.hk/info_kwokwl.html.

³⁸⁰ Hong Kong Baptist University, 'Dr Kwok Wai-luen: His Mission Is to Guide and Heal', *HKBU News*, 26 September 2018, <https://bunews.hkbu.edu.hk/news/people/dr-kwok-wai-luen-his-mission-is-to-guide-and-heal>.

³⁸¹ His MTh thesis was later turned into his first monograph. See Kwok Wai-luen, *Fandui he yi: Jia Yuming, ji yao zhuyi yu he yi yundong de jiuji* [Advocating Separatism: Chia Yu Ming, Fundamentalists and Their Difficulties in Chinese Church Union Movement] (Hong Kong: Tien Dao Publishing, 2002), xi.

³⁸² Kwok Wai-luen, *Shijia yu hongqi: Dangdai Zhongguo zhengjiao guanxi lunji* [The Cross and the Red Flag: on Contemporary Church-State Relations in China] (Hong Kong: VW Link, 2018), xi.

Assistant Professor of Theology within the Christianity and Chinese Culture Research Centre at the ABS and was the Centre's director until 2012.³⁸³ For him, it is natural that his current post is related to research on Chinese churches—he started working at HKBU as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Religion and Philosophy and Associate Director of the Centre for Sino-Christian Studies in 2012. He now holds the position of Associate Professor in the same department.³⁸⁴

Besides his teaching post, Kwok has also served on several boards, both in the church and in the academy. For example, he is a member of the board of directors of Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion and Culture at the CUHK, and also a member of the board of directors of the Langham Foundation, Hong Kong division. He is also a committee member of the Society for the Study of the History of Christianity in China, a member of the Theological and Current Affairs Committee of the C&MA Church Union of Hong Kong, and a member of the Church History and Archive Committee of the Hong Kong Chinese Christian Churches Union (HKCCCU).³⁸⁵ Furthermore, he is one of the founding members of Mission Citizens, an SMO that we will analyse towards the end of this chapter.

Kwok's dedication to the interaction between religion and daily life has earned him the President's Award for Outstanding Performance in Teaching at HKBU in 2018. During the interview for this award, he stated that religion should not be too abstract and remote; in fact, religion and philosophy exist in our everyday lives.³⁸⁶ With this attitude, it is not surprising that he seeks to express theology in the public sphere. His upbringing also serves him well—he belongs to one of the largest evangelical denominations in Hong Kong, received British

³⁸³ Hong Kong Baptist University, 'Associate Professor: Dr. Kwok, Wai Luen'.

³⁸⁴ Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, xi.

³⁸⁵ Hong Kong Baptist University, 'Associate Professor: Dr. Kwok, Wai Luen'.

³⁸⁶ Hong Kong Baptist University, 'Dr Kwok Wai-luen: His Mission Is to Guide and Heal'.

education,³⁸⁷ and worked or taught in local evangelical seminaries, his voice, positioned as that of a Christian intellectual, is accepted by many evangelicals. The second half of this chapter will begin examining how he projects his voice as an evangelical theologian in the public—the church.

Public Dialogue among Evangelical Theologians

Public theology in Hong Kong has been shaped by the identity struggle of Hong Kong citizens in the postcolonial era. Continuing the dialogue of the previous chapters, this section will explore how evangelicals perceive their identity due to the shift in the church-state relationship, then investigate how their identity influences their social and political involvement. This section will end with the analysis of two aspects of Mission Citizens, the movement Kwok helped establish: the implications of the statement of its vision and its engagement with digital media in the post–Umbrella Movement era.

Protestant Identity in Light of the Tension between the Church and State

Despite the absence of the word ‘identity’ in the earlier discussions in this chapter, part of the struggle of most Hong Kong Christians has been the changing definition of state which, after 1997, refers to both the HKSAR and the PRC. Connecting their anxiety to the instability the latter may have brought in the 1970s, it is not surprising that Hong Kong Christians developed the sense of ‘us’ versus ‘the others’ in terms of their relationship with Mainland China. On this note, this subsection will navigate some of the issues from an evangelical perspective, especially after the Handover and the Umbrella Movement.

³⁸⁷ Despite the return of Hong Kong to Mainland China more than 20 years ago, Hong Kongese still tend to think that British education and perhaps that of other parts of the world is better than local education.

For Kwok, the separation of church and state is necessary because it confirms the church's identity and the self-realisation of such identity through social and political involvement.³⁸⁸ Since the separation defines church and state as two entities, it protects the freedom of the church's members and further clarifies the church as a civil organisation. As the church has a different role than the state, it prevents the condemnation that not belonging to a certain denomination is equivalent to being disloyal to one's home country, a reference to the Puritans' situation in the nineteenth-century United Kingdom.³⁸⁹ Nonetheless, Kwok perceives that since politics are the 'matters of all people', citing Sun Yat-sen's (1866–1925) three principles of the people (*Sanmin zhuyi*),³⁹⁰ no citizen can isolate themselves from politics. Therefore, utilising the principle of separation of church and state as an excuse for not participating in politics is not acceptable because the principle is not meant to isolate Christians from political matters, a point that will be elaborated in the next section on social and political involvement.

Kwok formulates identity as the differentiation of an individual or a community between 'us' and 'the others'.³⁹¹ Drawing on the theory of social constructionism developed by Craig Calhoun (b. 1952), an American sociologist and former director of the London School of Economics (2012–2016), Kwok explains that identity becomes fluid when it depends on the interaction between individuals and society. In a more aggressive approach, some even assume

³⁸⁸ Kwok Wai-luen, 'Zhengjiao fenli, chuangzao, jiushu yu minzhu' [Separation of Church and State, Creation, Salvation, and Democracy], *Shidai luntan* [Christian Times], 2 November 2003, <https://christiantimes.org.hk/Common/Reader/News/ShowNews.jsp?Cid=310&Pid=21&Version=0&Charset=big5hkscs&Nid=21140>.

³⁸⁹ For details, see Rowan Strong, 'Anglicanism and the State in the Nineteenth Century', in *The Oxford History of Anglicanism, Volume III: Partisan Anglicanism and Its Global Expansion 1829–c.1914*, ed. Rowan Strong (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 93–115.

³⁹⁰ Sun Wen, *Sanmin zhuyi* [The Three Principles of the People] (Taiwan: Bainian qianshu [Hundred Years and Thousand Books], 2011).

³⁹¹ Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 53–54.

that the existence of identity itself is simply determined by one's social location.³⁹² The interpretation above seems to be similar to Paul Kwong's discourse in Chapter 2, that identity is fluid due to the continuous shift of self-understanding as Hong Kongese or Chinese.

Although Kwok has not written articles on the identity construction of Hong Kongese after the Umbrella Movement, his interpretation of youth evangelicals in 1970s Hong Kong may shed light on this discussion.³⁹³ In his analysis, Kwok ascribes the youth evangelicals' failure to mobilise others during their protest in the 1970s to their weakness of identity formation in the movement, using the theory of Bert Klandermans (b. 1944), Professor of Applied Social Psychology at the VU University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands. As Kwok explains, to build a collective belief and to legitimise the goals of a social movement, three elements must be considered: (1) a sense of injustice, (2) an element of identity, and (3) the factor of agency. The sense of injustice can cause disappointment or anger towards 'the others', in this case, the oppressors, which may build the identity of 'us'. The factor of agency is the collective belief that the movement can change certain situations or policies, which motivate individuals to continue to participate.³⁹⁴ For Kwok, the problem of youth evangelicals in the 1970s, a group mostly composed of university students, is that they did not feel the social injustice personally. As intellectuals and members of the middle class,³⁹⁵ they sensed that they had the duty to respond to

³⁹² Despite the importance of identity in society, both Calhoun and Kwok agree that the interaction between identity and society cannot preclude the essence of oneself. In other words, one cannot deny one's own essence; for example, one's race and gender. For details, see Craig Calhoun, *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), 13–14; Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 54–55.

³⁹³ For the evangelical churches in the 1970s and 1980s, the target group was youngsters, that is, attendees who were 30 years old or younger. According to church statistics, this group made up more than half of the congregation. For details, see Lo, Man-wah, *Huaren jiaohui shouce [The Handbook of Chinese Churches]* (Hong Kong: Chinese Coordination Centre of World Evangelism, 1981), 60.

³⁹⁴ Bert Klandermans, *The Social Psychology of Protest* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 4–18; Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 80–82.

³⁹⁵ Note that in the 1970s, only 3.2 per cent of adults were able to pursue tertiary education, compared to 15.6 per cent of the population in 2006, which means that having tertiary education was already an elite attribute in society. For details, see Census and Statistics Department, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, *A Graphic Guide on Hong Kong's Development (1967–2007)*, September 2008, 70.

the urgent social issues other Hong Kong citizens faced and felt that they should distinguish themselves from conservative pastors in the church, but they ultimately did not disapprove of the work of the colonial government. They believed that the social policy in their era could still alleviate the injustice in society.³⁹⁶ Hence, the contrast of ‘us’ and ‘the others’ was not strong enough to encourage them to continue the movement, because they felt the colonial government was still on their side.

Comparing the youth evangelicals in the 1970s to the evangelicals involved in the Umbrella Movement, one may comprehend why the latter ones are still passionate to continue their belief a few years after the event, in light of the recent protests against the extradition law, which have included a large number of Christians.³⁹⁷ Using Kwok’s approach as a starting point, most protesters, both Christian and non-Christian, have the perception that a government without universal suffrage of the Chief Executive is unjust. In their eyes, they are the oppressed ones, who are forced to obey the election rules set by the SAR or perhaps by the PRC. Their disappointment led to the formation of their identity, the ‘Umbrella citizens’, who live helplessly in an oppressed society, in which they cannot select the Chief Executive freely and are represented by someone they disapprove of.³⁹⁸ The factor of agency, for these citizens, is the hope that the success of the Movement might lead to universal suffrage. Even after the failure of

³⁹⁶ Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 82–83.

³⁹⁷ For details of the anti-extradition law protests, see James Griffiths, Helen Regan, and Eric Cheung, ‘Hong Kong Extradition Bill: Hundreds of Thousands Join Third Huge Protest in a Week’, *CNN*, 17 June 2019, <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/06/16/asia/hong-kong-protest-carrie-lam-china-extradition-intl-hnk/index.html>; for the Christians’ involvement in the protests, see Zhao Yan and Catherine Lai, ‘“Sing Hallelujah to the Lord”: Religion on the Forefront of Hong Kong’s Protests’, *Hong Kong Free Press*, 30 June 2019, <https://www.hongkongfp.com/2019/06/30/sing-hallelujah-lord-religion-forefront-hong-kongs-protests/>.

³⁹⁸ Even in the Movement, the protesters had a strong sense of distinguishing themselves from any leadership and declared that they should not be represented by anyone, a principle they termed it as ‘say no to the major platform’ (buyao datai). For details, see Peggy Man-yee Siu, ‘Buyao datai dao sanlao shequ: Cong yusan yundong zaisi gongmin yundong zuzhi moshi de zhuanxiang’ [From ‘Say No to the Major Platform’ to ‘the Umbrella Movement in the Community’: A Reflection on the Transformation of the Organisational Mode of a Civil Movement in Light of the Umbrella Movement], *Master of Cultural Studies, Lingnan University* 55 (November 2016), <https://commons.ln.edu.hk/mcsln/vol55/iss1/1/>.

the Movement, the protesters still have the urge to improve society and want Protestants to engage with the public sphere so that they know how they can perceive the world theologically. The lived experience of the movement becomes their trigger point to continue the ‘Movement’ and is seemingly the reason why Kwok initiated the Mission Citizens movement. The continuous tension regarding how Protestants, as part of the church, should dialogue with the state has become an urgent issue for most pastoral leaders—not only have they lost a vast number of members after the Umbrella Movement, but they also needed to develop a pastoral theology that could nurture their flocks. These pressing issues may lead us to the next section, exploring Kwok’s advice to the church on social and political involvement.

Social and Political Involvement

Due to the shift in the church-state relationship in post-1997 Hong Kong, and especially after the Umbrella Movement, struggles raised in this period relate to the extent to which the churches and individual Christians should engage in social and political issues. The section below presents Kwok’s some helpful suggestions to respond to the intensified debate among evangelicals, both within and outside churches.

Social Involvement

From Kwok’s analysis of social involvement (although he refers to the context of the 1970s), one may see that his concern is not merely for the historical past, but also for the twenty-first century readers of his book *Self-Defence or Social Concern?* amid the heated debate of the Umbrella Movement.³⁹⁹ For Kwok, social involvement refers to (1) the church’s interest in social

³⁹⁹ Note that this book was published in September 2014, the month the Umbrella Movement started. Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 1–5.

issues, (2) the church expressing opinions regarding social problems, (3) the church's social services, and (4) the church's social actions.⁴⁰⁰

In short, Kwok recognises that the evangelical youth in the 1970s struggled with the Protestants' general lack of interest towards social issues and were doubtful that the humanitarian work provided by Christian NGOs could bear witness to Christ. In other words, they felt that the church merely focused on social services (3), but it did not have an interest in social concerns (1) or an opinion on social issues (2); hence, it did not engage in social action (4). In general, the youth in the 1970s thought that social service was not equivalent to social concern and that the church was 'isolated from the world'.⁴⁰¹ Nevertheless, although they highlighted social concerns, it seems that the youth in the 1970s still wanted to be labelled as evangelicals—by emphasising the authority and the priority of evangelism, they tried to distinguish themselves from ecumenists, who tended to promote 'societal salvation'.⁴⁰² Separating themselves from both fundamentalists and ecumenists, the evangelical youth of the 1970s intended to develop a third identity not bounded by these two categories.

If we apply this logic to today's context, we may notice that the criticisms from the evangelical youth in the 1970s are similar to that of the evangelical participants in the youth-dominated Umbrella Movement.⁴⁰³ Like their predecessors, the latter think that the church is isolated from the world because some of the evangelical churches did not give an opinion on the

⁴⁰⁰ Note that Kwok developed these definitions from Choi Yuen-wan, one of the founding directors of the NGO Breakthrough. See Choi Yuen-wan, 'Cong "jiujian" tanqi—jidutu yu shehui' [Talking from the 'Invitation of Help': Christians and Society], *FES: Xianggang jidutu xueshang fuyin tuanqi tongxun* [*FES: The News of Hong Kong Fellowship of Evangelical Students*], April 1980; Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 13.

⁴⁰¹ Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 48.

⁴⁰² Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 48.

⁴⁰³ Note that 61 per cent of the protesters in the Umbrella Movement were younger than 29 years old, which means that any evangelicals involved in the Movement were most likely youth. For details, see Edmund Wai Cheng and Samson Wai-hei Yuen, "'Yusan yundong': Zhongguo bianchui de kangzheng zhengzhi" ['The Umbrella Movement': Contentious Politics on China's Periphery], *Ershiyi shiji* [*Twenty-First Century*] 147 (2 January 2015): 28.

Movement (2), nor did these churches engage in any social actions regarding the Movement (4). However, I would argue that, unlike the churches in the 1970s, today's church tends to show social concern towards its members with regards to their spirituality, although the evangelical youth may feel that social concern toward the churches' members is not enough. Moreover, Protestants nowadays seldom use the terms 'fundamentalists' or 'ecumenists' to distinguish those with different theological or political views. Since the social gospel was seldom discussed in relation to the Movement, I would suggest that those Protestant protesters did not have to use these terms to distinguish themselves from other Christians.

Concerning the church's social engagement in the 1970s and 1980s, Kwok's reflection on the shortcomings of certain criticisms of those churches is still relevant to today's context. Firstly, drawing from the argument of Nelson Wing-sun Chow (b. 1947), Emeritus Professor of Social Works and Social Administration at the University of Hong Kong, the criticisms towards churches about the lack of social concern seem to create noise, but they are without concrete sociopolitical goals and related content.⁴⁰⁴ The churches still had no clue about the extent of their participation in the debates and activities regarding social concern.⁴⁰⁵ Thus, the statement of Mission Citizens demonstrates that Kwok wants to be specific in terms of the action and duty the church should do, so they can avoid the mistakes he criticised.⁴⁰⁶

Secondly, the stress on the 'Christian witness' in sociopolitical issues may lead to the over-domination of the leader's opinions. Since most Hong Kong churches expected their senior pastor to be the first to speak out on any social issues, it became a trend that pastoral leaders had to act swiftly and speak quickly on certain social issues. The consequence is that, although

⁴⁰⁴ Nelson Wing-sun Chow, 'Shehui guanhuai huigu' [Summary of Social Concern], *Ganlan [Olive]* 23 (December 1979).

⁴⁰⁵ Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 126.

⁴⁰⁶ Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 181–183.

Christians were highly visible through declarations, statements, and seminars, the opinions of individual evangelical leaders did not always represent their churches. This is even more observable in the BCHK—the denomination of the Hong Kong Hauerwasians—where democratic polity is highlighted and individual theologians cannot represent the opinions of the whole church. The collectiveness or the ‘concern’ of churches, in Kwok’s observation, was not always reflected by the individual’s comment. Kwok speculates that since these leaders were too dominant in the past, the congregation did not have to think or even to act, because the leaders would have done their part. Because of this dilemma, Kwok suggests that churches should mobilise their congregations to participate in those debates or activities and not merely push their church leaders to do so. This seems to be the approach Kwok takes regarding Mission Citizens, the movement he established with other Protestant leaders.⁴⁰⁷

Another side effect of overemphasising Christian witness from senior pastoral leaders is that although the identity of the Protestants in Hong Kong as Christian was highlighted from those campaigns, the policy-making and its effectiveness might be overlooked. For example, Kwok elaborates on the consequence of the Christian involvement in medical care during the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) in 2003—despite the faithful testimony and the sacrifice of certain Christian nurses and doctors,⁴⁰⁸ the ultimate concern of Christians, or perhaps of all Hong Kong citizens, was how the Hong Kong government could improve the medical system and serve the patients rather than merely relying on sacrifice.⁴⁰⁹ In response to these shortcomings, Kwok suggests that improving the social situation is not the duty of

⁴⁰⁷ Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 126–127.

⁴⁰⁸ For the study on the correlation between Christian testimony and SARS, see Tang Mei-mei, *Xinwenchuanmei zhong de jidujiao xingxiang: Baozhang neirong fenxi baogao* [*The Image of Christianity in News and Media: An Analysis of the Content of Newspapers*] (Hong Kong: Centre of Christian Studies, Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2014), 9.

⁴⁰⁹ Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 128.

Christian leaders alone. Instead, he states that it is the duty of all Christians, especially lay leaders who have the skill and expertise that pastoral leaders and theologians may lack. Drawing parallels from the outbreak of SARS to that of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), this is a reminder of how Christians may improve the social situation despite the brokenness of the medical system and perhaps the government that manages the system. Christian organisations have apparently learnt the lessons from the SARS outbreak and in the anti-extradition law protests, such that they would automatically gather surgical masks for the underequipped medical staff in the hospitals and deliver the masks to them, after knowing the government would be unable to purchase masks for them to have a safe working environment.⁴¹⁰

In light of the limitations pastoral leaders may bring, whether they are the church's social services (3) or social actions (4), it is unsurprising that half of the committee members of Mission Citizens have a career in social services. Indeed, even Kwok comments that this goal of mobilising all believers for social involvement is slightly ambitious because the duty falls on all lay persons. However, he claims that being ambitious can prevent short-sighted campaigns that merely respond to certain issues and vanish after a certain period of time, with no concrete outcomes. In his opinion, having a sustainable outcome that benefits all Hong Kong citizens should be the target of Christian social involvement, which is also the goal he tries to achieve when developing a public theology.⁴¹¹

⁴¹⁰ For example, One Circle, a parachurch organisation specialising in music ministry and serving Hong Kong grassroots citizens, initiated the campaign 'Collecting Masks—Walking with Neighbours' to give out surgical masks to those who could not purchase masks and could not work because of the employer's requirement of wearing one. For details, see 'Shouji kouzhao—yu linshe tongxing' [Collecting Masks—Walking with Neighbours], One Circle, accessed 23 March 2020, <https://bit.ly/2Ja19EQ>.

⁴¹¹ Kwok, *Zibao yu guanhuai*, 129–131.

Political Involvement

As briefly discussed in Chapter 3, it is debatable if democracy exists in the Chinese contexts of Mainland China and Hong Kong. Arguing from a different angle than Lai, Kwok indicates that in Chinese culture and especially in the Confucian concept, political involvement is a special authority only granted to scholar-officials (*shi*) or noble persons (*junzi*), the highest of the four classes in society (scholar-officials, farmers, craftsmen, and merchants).⁴¹² Except for the revolution era, during which many were involved in politics, citizens generally did not engage with politics, and whoever touched on politics tended to be criticised.⁴¹³ It was not until the early twentieth century, when Sun Yat-sen introduced the three principles of the people—nationalism (*minzu*), democracy (*minzhu*), and the people's welfare (*minsheng*)—that politics became everyone's concern.⁴¹⁴

For Kwok, the ultimate goal of the church should be evangelism (Matthew 28:19–20; Ephesians 2:10–22; 1 Peter 2:9). Because of this duty, the church has already separated itself from other organisations on earth and has distinguished itself, as part of the kingdom of Jesus, from earthly powers.⁴¹⁵ Citing the concept of 'the whole church' presented at the Lausanne Movement in South Africa in 2010,⁴¹⁶ Kwok proposes that the church should engage in social action and the work of Christian NGOs should be shared by the church. Therefore, a church

⁴¹² Note that this system operated among East Asian countries such as South Korea and Japan, which were largely influenced by Confucianism. For details, see Feng Youlan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy* (Taipei: The Commercial Press, Taiwan, 2015), 59–62; Alexander Chow, *Chinese Public Theology: Generational Shifts and Confucian Imagination in Chinese Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 28–30.

⁴¹³ Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 147.

⁴¹⁴ See Sun, *Sanmin zhuyi*.

⁴¹⁵ Here Kwok refers to John Calvin's *Christian Doctrine* 4.20.1. Despite the lack of distinction between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Jesus, it seems that Kwok intends to highlight the role of Jesus in the Christian community. See Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 149.

⁴¹⁶ 'The Whole Church Taking the Whole Gospel to the Whole World', Theology Working Group of Lausanne Movement, 2 June 2019, <https://www.lausanne.org/content/twg-three-wholes>.

should take action, which includes political activities, in order to be considered a model church.⁴¹⁷ Despite proposing this kind of social action, Kwok reemphasises that the priority is still to preach the gospel, and political engagement should not lack this element. Hence, the church's sovereignty should refer to speaking God's word and dealing with spirituality, excluding any civil jurisdiction of worldly governments.⁴¹⁸ Furthermore, according to 1 Corinthians 12, there should be different roles in the body of Christ, which in this context would include local churches, Christian NGOs, pastoral leaders, and lay persons. Therefore, the church should testify in the role God grants her. By doing so, although churches in Hong Kong are all registered as NGOs under the Social Welfare Department,⁴¹⁹ their activities separate themselves from other organisations, and are not confused with merely humanitarian organisations.

Regarding the social role of the church, Kwok suggests that a less controversial approach is to participate in social services, which we have discussed in the last section. On top of this, the church should also play its prophetic role in regards to the issues of social ethics. If the government acts unjustly, the church should raise its voice and speak to the authority; however, the church should not be a substitute for the role of the government because this is not the original function of the church.⁴²⁰ For Kwok, the prophetic role of the Christian community should be more about social justice and the delivery of God's words, just as how pastoral leaders advised the emperor in the early church period.⁴²¹

⁴¹⁷ Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 149.

⁴¹⁸ Although the term 'sovereignty area' (*guanxia fanwei*) sounds similar to the term 'sphere sovereignty' coined by the Neo-Calvinist Abraham Kuyper (1837–1920), note that Kwok here quotes Calvin's *Christian Doctrine* 4.11–4.5 instead of Kuyper. For Kuyper's theology, see Abraham Kuyper, *Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1998); Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 151.

⁴¹⁹ 'Non-governmental Organisations Providing Subvented Services and Having Websites', Social Welfare Department, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, accessed 23 August 2019, https://www.swd.gov.hk/en/index/site_links/page_ngowebseite/.

⁴²⁰ Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 150–151.

⁴²¹ For the elaborations of the term 'prophecy', see E. A. Livingstone, 'Prophecy', in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

As for pastoral leaders, Kwok advises that since they have the duty of interpreting God's word, they should make this a priority and not take on any political roles. If pastoral leaders decide to speak out regarding politics, they should not use their pastoral roles to intervene in the political situations facing their flocks; and they should instead express their views as civil citizens.⁴²² This perspective seems to be acceptable to most evangelical denominations. Kwok's own argument demonstrates Jia Yuming's approach⁴²³—while Kwok agrees and expresses his concern on social issues, he carefully frames it in such a way as to avoid being seen as promoting the social gospel. Thus, he takes Albert B. Simpson (1843–1919), the founder of C&MA, as an example of how Protestants can care for the poor and needy while highlighting their role in evangelism.⁴²⁴ As a pastoral leader in an evangelical denomination which has a conservative approach on political involvement, Kwok tries to find a middle ground to redevelop a public theology for evangelicals.

For lay persons, Kwok indicates that they have two major roles: one as citizens of the kingdom of heaven and the other as civil citizens on earth. In a further secularised world, since Christians are a minority, Kwok suggests that they should learn to respect and listen to those with different beliefs and not merely impose Christian values on others, as this may lead to further conflicts. This advice most likely refers to the situation after the Umbrella Movement, when Hong Kong society became dichotomised due to differing political views about the Movement. Nonetheless, Kwok's standpoint is that despite having different beliefs than others, Christians should fulfil their duty as civil citizens and become involved in political activities according to their calling. Kwok's determination to be a good and faithful servant on earth

⁴²² Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 152–153.

⁴²³ Note that even Jia joined the Three-Self Patriotic Movement: he considered it a political activity that should not intervene in his pastoral role. For details, see Kwok, *Fandui he yi*, 60, 126–127.

⁴²⁴ Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 150–151.

propelled him to establish Mission Citizens as a way to engage theologically with the public sphere.

Mission Citizens: Testifying God in the Digital Era

Mission Citizens is a movement initiated by Kwok and several evangelical leaders,⁴²⁵ starting with a luncheon on 31 August 2015 where this vision was shared. As a response to the Umbrella Movement and the ‘31 August’ political reformation,⁴²⁶ Mission Citizens intends to gather Christians to bear witness to Christ in Hong Kong society. In response to the loss of the youth generation due to their distrust of the church after the Umbrella Movement, one of the main goals of Mission Citizens is to rebuild the church’s witness through a range of outreach activities and spiritual guidance to Hong Kong citizens.⁴²⁷

While the term ‘Citizens’ implies that the participants are the citizens of Hong Kong and of a civil society,⁴²⁸ ‘Mission’ suggests that the testimony of Christians should be embodied in their daily lives to illustrate Jesus’s teaching. Unlike the perception that the word ‘mission’ refers to missiology, the movement implies a type of evangelism that prioritises the church’s testimony through Christian witness in society.⁴²⁹ Although Mission Citizens is not a registered NGO in

⁴²⁵ The composition of the core committees shows the diversity of its members in terms of careers and missions, which will be elaborated in the next section.

⁴²⁶ ‘31 August’ (*ba sanyi*), or ‘the decision of 31 August’ (*ba sanyi jueding*) is an abbreviation of the procedure of universal suffrage of the Chief Executive in Hong Kong on 31 August 2014, in which the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress (NPCSC) finalised the election method of the Chief Executive. As the final decision was that no individuals or political parties were allowed to nominate a candidate for the Chief Executive post, the term now symbolises the anti-democratic motif of the NPCSC. For details, see ‘Hewei renda ba sanyi?’ [What Is 31 August of the National People’s Congress?], *Hong Kong Economic Times*, 20 August 2018, <https://service.hket.com/knowledge/2141622/%E4%BD%95%E8%AC%82%E4%BA%BA%E5%A4%A7831%EF%BC%9F>.

⁴²⁷ Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 173.

⁴²⁸ Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 180.

⁴²⁹ Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 177.

Hong Kong,⁴³⁰ its operation seems to adopt the SMO models to realise its goal—in the American sociologist John Lofland’s (b. 1936) definition, ‘associations of persons making idealistic and moralistic claims about how human personal or group life ought to be organized that, at the time of their claims-making, are marginal to or excluded from mainstream society—the then dominant constructions of what is realistic, reasonable, and moral’.⁴³¹ As briefly explained earlier, while all the churches in Hong Kong are required to register as NGOs, their social roles may be different from other humanitarian organisations and merely focus on the religious aspects in the public sphere. In contrast, Christian SMOs, such as Mission Citizens, tend to initiate movements that may mobilise Christians, and even reach to members of other beliefs in the public sphere. It has this characteristic of a parachurch, but the structure of the organisation itself is perhaps even more flexible than a parachurch, in that it does not stress membership in its activities.

The significant features of this movement are that, firstly, it is initiated by several evangelical leaders to promote a civil society, which is still uncommon in the Hong Kong evangelical circle. Secondly, it is promoted through digital media, a major platform for theological discourse to flourish during and after the Umbrella Movement. Based on this observation, the following section will mainly analyse (1) its statement of vision and (2) its use of digital media to express its public theology, to comprehend how Mission Citizens perceives its realistic, reasonable, and moral goals in the post–Umbrella Movement era.

⁴³⁰ This was confirmed by Kwok during my interview. Kwok Wai-luen, in discussion with the author, 27 March 2019.

⁴³¹ Lofland, *Social Movement Organizations*, 2–3.

The Statement of Vision

As Kwok indicates in one of my interviews, he and with other core members drafted the statement of Mission Citizens,⁴³² which is also published in his recent book *The Cross and the Red Flag*. The statement is divided into four parts: civil society, the mission of the gospel, the responsibility of the believers, and the role of the churches. This section will mainly discuss the aspects of civil society and the Christians' responsibility.

Mission Citizens considers civil society an important place for Hong Kong Christians to testify to their belief in God. Part of its mission is to redefine and redevelop the role of Hong Kong Protestants according to what it sees as the core value of Hong Kong: to affirm social and political rights as well as the self-determination of such rights, as defined by the treaty in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) from the International Bill of Human Rights.⁴³³ For Mission Citizens, a member of the civil society should learn to listen to and respect others, in spite of the pluralistic voices in society. Hence, one should avoid labelling or oppressing others who have different voices. (This is in response to the dispute generated among churches and in the society after the Umbrella Movement.)⁴³⁴

⁴³² Kwok Wai-luen, in discussion with the author, 27 March 2019.

⁴³³ United Nations Human Rights Committee, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, 16 December 1966, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CCPR.aspx>; United Nations Human Rights Committee, *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, 16 December 1966, <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/cescr.pdf>.

⁴³⁴ Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 181; Francis Yip, 'Yusan yundong yizhounian: Jiaohui de zaichang yu lichang' [The Anniversary of the Umbrella Movement: The Presence and the Absence of the Church], *Jiaohui zhinang* [Church Think Tank], October 2015, https://www.theology.cuhk.edu.hk/tc/publication/church_think_tank/issue67/article.

Regarding the Christians' responsibility, Mission Citizens stresses that the duty of being a mature citizen in the civil society is as important as the individual's spiritual life.⁴³⁵ Unlike some evangelicals in Hong Kong who tend to treat sin as an individual matter, the Mission Citizens statement indicates that sin also exists in the social structure. To avoid a dichotomy between individual and society, the statement suggests that Christians should continuously reflect on their spirituality so they can discern in their context and be reminded by God's guidance about their individuality and their role in society.⁴³⁶ This suggestion aims to strengthen their faith by allowing Christians to reflect on their spirituality and role as citizens, in case they may face other political disputes, like the Umbrella Movement, that may put their faith on trial.

Similar to Kwok's discussion of evangelicals' political involvement, Mission Citizens declares that Christians should play a prophetic role in society and be aware of its imbalance in the power dynamics so that they can always speak for the minorities.⁴³⁷ Christian witnesses should be spread through different areas and roles in society so that the core values of Hong Kong can be maintained. Furthermore, due to their characterisation as moral individuals, Christians should consider themselves servants of society and be willing to suffer in the future based on this social role.⁴³⁸

Nevertheless, the emphasis on the social roles of civil citizens does not undermine their duty of evangelism. In the section on the mission of the gospel, the statement asserts that the gospel provides guidance of life and propels them to be God's testifiers. The elements of

⁴³⁵ Note that the ecumenical theologian Kung Lap-yan also discusses the importance of Christian spirituality and its influence in civil society, highlighting Max Weber's theory of spiritual capital. For details, see Kung Lap-yan, *Zai an jiao yanshuo shang zhu* [*Dialogue with God in the Darkness*] (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Christian Institute, 2016), 221–224.

⁴³⁶ Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 182.

⁴³⁷ Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 182.

⁴³⁸ Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 182–183.

evangelicalism are still observable in the statement, and the core values of evangelicalism are still equally weighed with being civil citizens on earth.⁴³⁹

This relatively liberal approach, highlighting the role of civil society and the imperfect social structure, can be attributed to the diverse composition of the committees of Mission Citizens, who are mostly experienced in organising social movements or are leaders of SMOs. The list of committee members are: (1) Wan Hoi-wing, Assistant Executive Officer at the Hong Kong Christian Council (HKCC);⁴⁴⁰ (2) Wong Ka-fai, the school chaplain of CCC, CUHK; (3) Fermi Wai-fan Wong, the founding director of Hong Kong Unison, an NGO working for ethnic minorities in Hong Kong;⁴⁴¹ (4) Joe Cho-ki Yau, lecturer in the Department of Computer Science, HKBU, a candidate in the Hong Kong Committee Election in the IT subsection in 2011, and a committee member of the Christian Alliance for Democracy;⁴⁴² (5) Common Lung-pun Chan, a former lecturer at CCC, CUHK and founding pastor of the Umbrella City Cyberchurch;⁴⁴³ (6) Luk Fung-ping, a social worker at the Institute of Social Service

⁴³⁹ Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 182.

⁴⁴⁰ 'Staff', Hong Kong Christian Council, accessed 30 April 2019, <http://www.hkcc.org.hk/acms/content.asp?site=hkccnew&op=listbycode&code=About-Staff&sort=EventStartDate&order=desc&topn=1>.

⁴⁴¹ Chan Shing-nam, 'Zhuanfang Wang Huifen: Tamen xiang xuehao Zhongwen nimen bujiaohao, xianzai yao tamen aiguo?' [An Interview with Fermi Wai-fan Wong: They wanted to learn Chinese but failed, and now you wanted them to be patriotic?], *Duan chuanmei* [*The Initium*], 30 August 2017, <https://theinitium.com/article/20170830-hongkong-fermi-wong/>.

⁴⁴² 'Dr. YAU, Joe Cho Ki', Hong Kong Baptist University, accessed 30 April 2019, <https://www.comp.hkbu.edu.hk/v1/?page=profile&id=jckyau>; '2011 Election Committee Elections (IT Subsector)', *IT Voice 2012*, accessed 30 April 2019, <http://itvoice2012.hk/wp/candidates/dr-joe-c-k-yau>; Christian Alliance for Democracy, 'Jidutu minzhu lianxian zhengzhi gaige fangan jianyishu' [Proposal of Political Reformation from the Christian Alliance for Democracy], *Shidai luntan* [*Christian Times*], 11 October 2007, https://christiantimes.org.hk/Common/Reader/News/ShowNews.jsp?Nid=43532&Pid=6&Version=0&Cid=150&Charset=big5_hkses.

⁴⁴³ Note that the Umbrella City Cyberchurch is a parachurch that aims to construct a public theology in light of the Umbrella Movement. See 'Guanyu women' [About Us], Umbrella City Cyberchurch, accessed 1 July 2018, <http://web.archive.org/web/20180701155626/http://www.ucchk.org/38364260442510520497.html>; 'Common Chan', Divinity School of Chung Chi College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, accessed 28 March 2018, <https://www.theology.cuhk.edu.hk/tc/academics/teaching-staff/common-lung-pun-chan>; 'Liu Tsui-yuk', Divinity School of Chung Chi College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, accessed 28 March 2018, <https://www.theology.cuhk.edu.hk/tc/node/1531>.

Department;⁴⁴⁴ (7) Lau Chi-hung, senior pastor of Christian City Mission Church;⁴⁴⁵ (8) Choi Yeung-mei, senior pastor of Chun Lei Christian Mission Heep Ying Church;⁴⁴⁶ (9) Tang Mei-mei, Research Assistant at the Christian Research Centre of CCC, CUHK;⁴⁴⁷ and (10) Herman Wai-chung Tang, official solicitor of Occupy Central for Love and Peace (OCLP) and one of the OCLP's ten official supporters.⁴⁴⁸ Unlike the committees of the Statement of Faith in 1984, all of whom were pastoral leaders of major denominations in Hong Kong, the leaders of Mission Citizens are not all leaders of local churches, as some of the founding members are leaders of SMOs. For this reason, Mission Citizens may receive criticism from other evangelicals for their Christian conviction.

Nonetheless, the statement in some ways resembles the 1984 Statement of Faith discussed in Chapter 1, that illustrates the vision of evangelicals towards Hong Kong society. As an evangelical scholar who has studied this statement, Kwok was probably influenced by it during his formative years. The Mission Citizens' statement seems to go one step further than the 1984 Statement—it defines and includes the concept of civil society, which is usually omitted in statements issued from evangelical churches in Hong Kong. Another difference between Mission Citizens and the 1984 Statement is the former's effort to arrange events to implement its belief.

⁴⁴⁴ 'Shezong: You she gong zao yaoqiu canyu fan zhan Zhong youxing' [Hong Kong Social Workers' General Union: Social Workers Were Requested to Participate with Anti-Occupy Central Protest], *Hong Kong Economic Journal*, 16 August 2014, <https://bit.ly/39YvGhB>.

⁴⁴⁵ Chan Pak-tan, 'Heping zhi zi pei ling hui: Liu Zhixiong: Buneng suibian tichu fuhe' [The Son of Prince Conference: Lau Chi-hung: Don't Casually Propose Reconciliation], *Shidai luntan* [Christian Times], 24 November 2014, <https://bit.ly/2U8xIMG>.

⁴⁴⁶ Choi Yeung-mei, 'Chenqingshu de chenqing: Qiu ren de ren? Shui de zeren?' [Pleading in the Petition: Seek Virtue and Acquire It? Whose Responsibility?], *Zhong xinwen* [Citizen News], 24 August 2017, <https://bit.ly/2SU3IU8>.

⁴⁴⁷ 'Jidujiao yanjiu zhongxin yanjiu ren yuan', Divinity School of Chung Chi College, Chinese University of Hong Kong, accessed 30 April 2019, http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/theology/big5/personnel_big5_2014.html.

⁴⁴⁸ Herman Wai-chung Tang, 'Shanggan' [Maudlin], *Sky Post*, 15 April 2019, <https://bit.ly/37P2yI5>; 'Heping zhan Zhong zhichizhe fenxianghui: Deng Weizong lueshi' [Sharing Session of the Supporters of Occupy Central with Love and Peace: Lawyer Herman Wai-chung Tang], Occupy Central with Love and Peace, 6 May 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HYcGtp4HYng>.

For example, the events co-organised with the Hong Kong Fellowship of Evangelical Students and the Enoch Fellowship of Hong Kong Police Force provided a space for these groups to dialogue with each other, in light of the further dichotomised relationship between the youth and Hong Kong police after the Movement.⁴⁴⁹ This kind of collaboration seems to fulfil the definition of public theology—to allow different parties in the public sphere to dialogue with one another theologically. Although the tension between police and protester cannot be erased merely by staging one event, at least it shows a gesture towards a dialogue between these groups. Moreover, the Mission Citizens approach offers an example for local churches to follow—instead of maintaining silence as a way to show harmony, they may initiate dialogue with groups whose political or theological views differ from their own. This kind of testimony does not have to come from particular church leaders, but can be witnessed through lay persons. A parallel can be drawn to Hauerwas’s emphasis on the church witness in the world, which will be elaborated in Chapter 6.

In a response to the Mission Citizens’ statement, Leung Wing-kong, senior pastor of Ma On Shan Ling Liang Church, praised the initiative of Mission Citizens and pointed to the weakness of evangelical churches in public theology. For Leung, since each church has its own hierarchy as defined by the local church and its denomination (if it has one), the ‘whole ecclesiology’ (*zhengquan jiaohuiguan*) helpfully constructs a worldview where the church and Christian NGOs can complement each other based on their different roles and functions. However, Leung is aware that the differentiation of roles sometimes leads to the church’s

⁴⁴⁹ The origin of the conflict was the violence that police subjected the protesters to during the Movement, and in some cases, police did assault the protesters, which was discovered by public media accidentally. For details, see Ellie Ng, ‘Police Officers Jailed for 2 years for Assault against Occupy Activist Ken Tsang’, *Hong Kong Free Press*, 17 February 2017, <https://www.hongkongfp.com/2017/02/17/police-officers-jailed-for-assault-against-occupy-activist-ken-tsang/>.

isolation from society because there are NGOs that do the work for them.⁴⁵⁰ In light of this opinion, I would add that since some Christians have left the church due to its political apathy, perhaps Christian NGOs, as well as SMOs like Mission Citizens, can build another ‘local church’ for these Christians. If Christian NGOs are willing to cooperate with local churches, it may raise the church’s awareness of social issues, not only among the leaders, but also for all church members; thus, the church will be reminded of its prophetic role within society.

Use of Digital Media

As briefly discussed in Chapter 2 with reference to David Tracy’s category of the technoeconomic realm in society, it is observable that the HKSKH is focussed on the public of the society, but is less engaged with digital media.⁴⁵¹ Despite the increasing use of digital media because of the COVID-19 outbreak, it seems that, in general, SMOs are more effective in promoting their vision to publicise themselves through digital media. Perceiving it as a growing trend among SMOs,⁴⁵² Mission Citizens mainly uses Facebook, a more popular social media platform for Hong Kongese, to fulfil its missions. Note, however, that evangelicals’ use of digital media is different from the technoeconomic realm as Tracy configures it, which involves primarily instrumental rationality.⁴⁵³ Although social media is effective for Mission Citizens’

⁴⁵⁰ Leung Wing-kong, ‘Shiming gongmin de jianyi: Jiaohui de juese’ [Advice from the Mission Citizens: The Role of the Church], *Shidai luntan* [Christian Times], 25 November 2015, <https://christiantimes.org.hk/Common/Reader/News/ShowNews.jsp?Nid=92099&Pid=6&Version=0&Cid=1093&Charset=big5hkscs>.

⁴⁵¹ For example, the following link is the type of information usually shown on their social media page: <https://bit.ly/3bl9n6E>. See Echo, ‘Xinxing feiyan yi chao: Muqu-chuandao qu wang bo chongbai zixun’ [New Pneumonia Outbreak: The Podcast for Pastoral and Missionary Areas], Facebook, 25 February 2020, <https://bit.ly/3bl9n6E>.

⁴⁵² Kwok Wai-luen, in discussion with the author, 27 March 2019.

⁴⁵³ David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (London: SCM Press, 1981), 8–9.

campaign, it is evident that their posts as well as the events they plan are usually value-driven. In other words, their usage of social media is mainly influenced by value rationality.⁴⁵⁴

Furthermore, given the significant role played by digital media in the Umbrella Movement, Mission Citizens' use of it is symbolic.⁴⁵⁵ As observed by Francis Lee and Joseph Chan, Professors of Journalism and Communication at the CUHK, social networking services (SNSs) act as a major platform to assist with the formation and the dynamics of social movements, as evidenced in the Umbrella Movement.⁴⁵⁶ This trend has also been shown in the anti-extradition law protests organised through the messaging platform Telegram, as observed by Simon Shen, Associate Professor of Global Studies at the CUHK.⁴⁵⁷ In fact, most involved in the Umbrella Movement are comfortable with using digital media as a platform to receive information and exchange ideas. Although the founding members of Mission Citizens are not leaders of the major organisations in the Umbrella Movement,⁴⁵⁸ such as OCLP or Hong Kong Student Federation, it is obvious that they are well aware of how the rise of social media aids in promoting their vision

⁴⁵⁴ For further discussions of instrumental rationality and value rationality, see Stephen Kalberg, 'Max Weber's Types of Rationality: Cornerstones for the Analysis of Rationalization Processes in History', *The American Journal of Sociology* 85, 5 (March 1980): 1145–1179.

⁴⁵⁵ Here I should note that I am aware of the Catholic engagement in the public sphere through social media, such as Joseph Zen's personal page or the activist group Yellow Umbrella Christian Grassroots Organisation. However, this thesis will not discuss Catholic social theology in digital media. For details, see 'Joseph Zen', Facebook, accessed 29 May 2019, <https://www.facebook.com/cardzen>; 'Yellow Umbrella Christian Grassroots Organisation', Facebook, accessed 17 April 2020, <https://bit.ly/2RJNZ3B>.

⁴⁵⁶ For example, the protesters in the Umbrella Movement used Facebook groups to request materials, such as ice cubes, bandages, and bottled water, when they were attacked by the police with pepper spray and needed first-aid assistance. Such activity can be seen on Facebook: '926 Pingmin zai zhengzong xiancheng' [26 September Grassroots Citizens at the Civil Square], Facebook, accessed 28 March 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/hk926/photos/a.351496551667942.1073741827.351486368335627/360416574109273/?type=3&theater>. For a detailed discussion, see Francis L. F. Lee and Joseph M. Chan, *Media and Protest Logics in the Digital Era: The Umbrella Movement in Hong Kong* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 11–16.

⁴⁵⁷ Simon Shen, 'Zhengfu weihe luohou erbainian: Quzhongxinghua de wangmin sanda fabao, yu quanqiu sheyun niandai' [Why the Government has been Outdated for Two Hundred Years: The Three Tools of Decentralisation for Netizens, and the Era of the Global Social Movement], *Suiyuan jia shu* [Family Letter according to Fate], 4 August 2019, <https://bit.ly/2TZ9ZZC>.

⁴⁵⁸ Only one of them (Herman Wai-chung Tang) was among 'the Ten Sacrificers of Occupy Central' (*Zhan Zhong Shi sishi*), who were willing to be arrested by the police during the Occupy Central Movement. Occupy Central with Love and Peace, 'Heping zhan Zhong zhichizhe fenxianghui: Deng Weizong lueshi'.

and mission. For example, to direct the concern of Hong Kong Christians towards the persecution of churches in Mainland China before Christmas in 2018, Mission Citizens collaborated with Caring Groups of Pastoral Leaders (*Jiaomui guanhuaituan*), Christians for Hong Kong Society, the Committee of Social Concern of Ma On Shan Methodist Church, and Hong Kong Christian Fellowship of City Concern to hold Sunday services with the slogan 'In Solidarity with Suffering, Let's Wear Black'.⁴⁵⁹ Despite the short notice, by 16 December, the post on the Mission Citizens Facebook page had reached more than 500,000 individuals,⁴⁶⁰ and more than 100 pastoral leaders and theologians co-signed the prayer related to this event. Not only did the event itself express its vision, but the digital presence of Mission Citizens also expresses solidarity with those who suffer. The frequent use of digital media helps to illustrate the public theology of Hong Kong evangelicals, which is something the other two groups have yet to develop.

To reach to the marginalised ones in the church, that is, the youth people who feel ignored by the older generation, Mission Citizens indirectly testifies God through their active use of social media. As argued by Theresa A. Hunt, university lecturer at New Jersey Institute of Technology in Newark, social movement facilitated online more easily connects with the younger generations who may have been marginalised by dominant groups in society.⁴⁶¹ As an

⁴⁵⁹ Mission Citizens, 'Cheon heiyi, tong shouku' [In Solidarity with Suffering, Let's Wear Black], Facebook, 16 December 2018, <https://www.facebook.com/missioncitizens/posts/2187330984919558/>.

⁴⁶⁰ While the academic world has no established definition of social media outreach, the digital marketing company Sprout Social suggests that it is 'the process of using social networks like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn to raise awareness for your brand, content, or to build new relationships'. See Dominique Jackson, 'Social Media Outreach for Beginners', *Sprout Social*, 19 September 2016, <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-outreach/>; The number of views was provided by Kwok during an interview on 27 March 2019. Kwok Wai-luen, in discussion with the author, 27 March 2019.

⁴⁶¹ Theresa A. Hunt, 'The Digital Solidarity Trap: Social Movement Research, Online Activism, and Accessing the Other's Others', in *Digital Sociologies*, ed. Jessie Daniels, Karen Gregory, and Tressie McMillan Cottom (Bristol: Policy Press, 2017), 108.

SMO tackling theological issues raised by the Umbrella Movement, Mission Citizens shows its determination to walk with the evangelical youth and illustrates its vision through continuous dialogue with different parties.

Conclusion

Moving beyond the publics of Anglican thinkers and scholars in Sino-Christian theology, —the state and the academy, respectively—this chapter illustrates a public theology occurring amongst evangelicals, emphasising the role of churches in the public. It is sometimes difficult to draw the boundary between denominations because they are highly interlinked. Nevertheless, this chapter attempts to show how an evangelical public theology developed with a focus on the public of the church. The discourses above demonstrate Kwok's intention to build a public theology from the church—for how the church perceives the public, and how its members, including pastoral leaders and lay persons, interact with other agencies in the public sphere including NGOs (whether Christian or not), as a result of those perceptions.

Adding one more layer to this, Kwok has helpfully included Christian SMOs in the dialogue, which is a relatively 'liberal' step for an evangelical circle. I also consider this step necessary because, if evangelical leaders comprehend that the loss of church members is due to the church's political apathy related to the Movement, a more durable solution is to develop a community similar to the format of the Movement, comprising the heavy use of social media as well as campaigns or statements that are easily understood by its followers.

Unlike Anglican leaders in Hong Kong, who usually have some responsibilities in the Hong Kong government, evangelical theologians avoid taking on those roles in case they violate the principle of separation of church and state. In contrast to scholars in Sino-Christian theology,

although evangelical theologians also take the academic approach seriously, they tend to construct their theology from the standpoint of churches and their congregations.

Hong Kong evangelical readers of this thesis may raise concerns: To what extent does the church need to testify to God? How can the church itself be categorised among those who have taken social actions? With regard to these questions, it would be helpful to consider Stanley Hauerwas's Christology and ecclesiology, which has been seen as attractive to evangelicals, especially Baptists in Hong Kong, as a guide to construct a public theology that bears witness to Jesus in a further dichotomised world, in light of the social movements widespread in Hong Kong society.

CHAPTER 5

The ‘Hauerwasian’ Theologies of Hong Kong Hauerwasians

It continues to be a mystery for me to understand why I am better read and understood in Hong Kong than I am in America. I can only think that one of the reasons is Christians in Hong Kong are not in control even of their own lives which makes them free to live out of control.

–Stanley Hauerwas, 2016⁴⁶²

The theology of Stanley Hauerwas (b. 1940), the American Christian ethicist, has not often been associated with Baptists in the United States, at least not with Southern Baptists or American Baptists. Hence, it is surprising to see many Hong Kong Baptist theologians, such as Freeman Huen, Vincent Lau, and Andres Tang, known collectively as ‘Hong Kong Hauerwasians’ (*Gangshi Houpai* or *Houshi sanbao*, ‘the three Hauerwasians’),⁴⁶³ engaged with several themes in Hauerwas’s theology, such as the church’s witness to the world and nonviolence. To illustrate why Hauerwas has become a popular figure among Hong Kong evangelicals in general, and Baptists in particular, this chapter will provide an overview of the theological discourses of the Hong Kong Hauerwasians, noting some of their limitations, before

⁴⁶² Quoted in Freeman Huen, *Shehui· lunli: Du xie Houhuoshi* [Title in English on colophon: *Writing with Hauerwas: Essays on Social Ethic*] (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers, 2017), xi.

⁴⁶³ For the purpose of this project, I will use the term ‘*Gangshi Houpai*’ to identify this group of theologians, for this term literally means ‘Hauerwasian in Hong Kong style’. Note that ‘*Houshi sanbao*’ has a slightly negative connotation which implies ‘the three (unintelligent) guys who employ Hauerwasian theology’.

suggesting in the next chapter how Hauerwas's social ethics can be useful in constructing a Hong Kong public theology.

It is evident that the lives of Hong Kong citizens are, as Hauerwas describes, not under their own control as a result of the political instability of Hong Kong society after the Umbrella Movement. This political instability leads to confusion among churches about how they should interact with, or respond to, the intensified division about the participation of the democratic movement in society. As Hauerwas suggests in one of his best-known monographs, *A Community of Character*, Christian social ethics should be conducted from the perspective of those who are content to live 'out of control'.⁴⁶⁴ In other words, Christian social ethics are not only for the powerful but also for the oppressed. Thus, the term 'out of control' can perhaps be applied to many protesters, who may be frustrated by both the social situation and the atmosphere in the church.

As the previous three chapters have shown, each group of theologians (that is, Anglican theologians, scholars in Sino-Christian theology, or evangelical theologians) develops their public theology based on the publics with which the group most frequently interacts: society, academy, or church, respectively. While the theologies each group produces speak for their particular audience, they can be a double-edged sword—their public theologies can be difficult to understand for those outside their respective public. For example, the public theology of Hong Kong Anglicanism tends to be pro-establishment, leaning towards the state, under the umbrella of Tracy's state-media-art category of society; thus, it is challenged by grassroots citizens in Hong Kong, especially those heavily involved in the Umbrella Movement. Regarding scholars in Sino-Christian theology, since they tend towards dialogue within the academy, their theology can

⁴⁶⁴ Stanley Hauerwas, *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 11.

often be too obscure for those outside the ivory tower of the academy to comprehend. For evangelical theologians, there are also two opposing viewpoints: some may argue that the public theology developed by the church is too inward-looking, while others may hold that public theology is mainly about public issues and therefore is not theological enough. Hong Kong Hauerwasians, as evangelicals, can probably be criticised as having an inward-looking orientation, yet they nevertheless intend to develop a theology that connects the church with the world.

In particular, the ecclesiocentric approach of Hauerwas's theology is appealing to Hong Kong Hauerwasians. For example, Freeman Chi-wai Huen (b. 1968), a leading voice among the Hong Kong Hauerwasians, argues that if theology must have public relevance, it should be developed from and for the church. According to Huen, theology does not need another category called 'public theology' in order to show that the church has public relevance, because public relevance should start from the followers of Jesus themselves.⁴⁶⁵ For this reason, I find Hauerwas's theology suitable for complementing the conversations of the previous three chapters, especially for evangelical theologians, because of their quest to build a theology for the church. For many Hong Kong Christians, the Hong Kong Hauerwasians are the main representatives of Hauerwas's theology, even though it is an incomplete picture. It is therefore important to first survey their views, despite my disagreement with their various interpretations of Hauerwas's theology, so that in Chapter 6, I can offer a further discussion about how Hauerwas's theology can be beneficial to the current discourse of public theology in Hong Kong.

⁴⁶⁵ Note that Huen denies the necessity of developing a public theology, which will be elaborated on in later sections. Freeman Huen, 'Gonggong shenxue/ shui de "gonggong"? You ji "shenxue"? [Public Theology/ Whose 'Public'? How 'Theological'?], *Shandao qikan [Hill Road]* 31 (July 2013): 59–60.

Building on the previous three chapters, this chapter will navigate Hauerwas's theology as interpreted by the three Hong Kong Hauerwasians. The analysis will consult their articles in *Hill Road* (an academic journal issued by the Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary), Huen's monograph *Writing with Hauerwas* (which examines Hauerwas's book *The Peaceable Kingdom* at length), and their articles in *Christian Times* (a Protestant newspaper in Hong Kong). After highlighting their rise as representatives of Hauerwas in the midst of debates around the election of the selection committee for the Chief Executive of Hong Kong, this chapter will evaluate three aspects of their theologies vis-à-vis Hauerwas's social ethics: (1) their concepts of the separation of church and state, which constitutes a comparison between their understanding of sectarianism and liberalism and that of Hauerwas; (2) their perception of the 'publicness' of public theology; and (3) their position on civil disobedience in relation to the Umbrella Movement.

The Background of Huen, Lau, and Tang

All three Hong Kong Hauerwasians—Freeman Chi-wai Huen, Vincent Chun-pang Lau and Andres Siu-kwong Tang—teach at the Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary (HKBTS), the official seminary of the Baptist Convention of Hong Kong (BCHK).⁴⁶⁶ Freeman Huen has been Assistant Professor of Practical Theology (social ethics) at the HKBTS since 2012 and is a member of the Christian and Missionary Alliance.⁴⁶⁷ He has a wide range of academic interests, as reflected in his various academic degrees: PhD in Anthropology at the University of Cambridge in 2002, Master of Science in Engineering at the University of Hong Kong (HKU) in

⁴⁶⁶ The other two denominations among the three are the Christian and Missionary Alliance, and the Evangelical Free Church of China.

⁴⁶⁷ 'Freeman Huen', Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed 20 August 2019, <https://www.hkbts.edu.hk/Common/Reader/News/ShowNews.jsp?Nid=19023&Pid=54&Version=0&Cid=558>; Huen, *Shehui: lunli*, xiii.

1992, Master of Arts in Philosophy at the London School of Economics in 1994, Master of Arts in the Philosophy of Science at the University of Pittsburgh in 1998,⁴⁶⁸ and Bachelor of Arts in Theology and Religious Studies at Oxford Brookes University, which he pursued after his doctoral degree.⁴⁶⁹

Besides his enthusiasm for collecting degrees, Huen worked as an Administrative Officer (AO) with the Hong Kong Government from 2001 to 2008.⁴⁷⁰ This was considered one of the most powerful jobs in the government because the post could lead one to be a chief officer of a governmental department or even the Chief Executive of Hong Kong.⁴⁷¹ Before leaving the government for a career in theology, he was an Assistant District Officer in the Home Affairs Department of Tuen Mun District Office after rotations in different departments, such as the Commerce, Industry and Technology Bureau, and the Health, Welfare and Food Bureau.⁴⁷²

Considering his governmental post had good career prospects, at least to many Hong Kongese, including Christians,⁴⁷³ it was surprising that Huen quit the job to become an assistant researcher at the Divinity School of Chung Chi College, Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK), where his salary was one-third that of his previous job.⁴⁷⁴ But for him, this decision

⁴⁶⁸ Simon Shen, 'Shenme ren fangwen shenme ren: Wei fasheng zuoge jianzheng' [What Type of People Interview What Type of People? Speaking Out as a Testimony], *Ming Pao*, 30 November 2008; 'Heyue zhi wu qiantu: Boshi zhengwuguan chuzou, zhengfu jianghua zaota jingying' [Contract-Based System Has No Good Prospect: The Exile of an Administrative Officer with a Doctorate Degree. The Bureaucracy of the Government Has Ruined Elites], *The Sun*, 3 April 2008, <http://the-sun.on.cc/channels/news/20080403/200804030354200000.html>.

⁴⁶⁹ Huen, *Shehui lunli*, front cover.

⁴⁷⁰ Shen, 'Shenme ren fangwen shenme ren'; *The Sun*, 'Heyue zhi wu qiantu'.

⁴⁷¹ For example, the current Chief Executive, Carrie Lam, started her governmental career in the role of Administrative Officer. Chief Executive of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, *Biography*, accessed 21 August 2019, <https://www.ceo.gov.hk/eng/biography.html>.

⁴⁷² *The Sun*, 'Heyue zhi wu qiantu'.

⁴⁷³ The popularity of applying to the post of Administrative Officer is reflected in its low acceptance rate: according to the statistics provided by the Civil Service Bureau, in 2017, the successful application rate for the Administrative Officer post was 0.2 per cent of 17,000 applicants. See Kwong Hiu-pang, 'Zhengwu zhuren jingzheng jilie: Qunian jie 1.7 wan shenqing, yu 515 ren zheng yi xiwei' [The Job Competition for the Administrative Officer Is Vigorous: 17,000 Applications Were Received Last Year, Which Means 515 People Contesting for One Position], *HK 01*, 26 July 2018, <https://bit.ly/2N77GjW>.

⁴⁷⁴ As a guidance, recent figures show that the entry-level salary for an Administrative Officer in the Hong Kong government in 2019 was HKD53,195 (GBP 5240) per month, while the average salary of a research assistant

represented God's guidance. Starting his new career at the CUHK appealed to him because it allowed him to edit the theological journal *Church Think Tank*. He perceived this as God's grace enabling him to apply his previous knowledge in the government to theology so that pastors needing to update news on public issues related to theology could read *Church Think Tank* and get the necessary information. This was something Huen had always wanted to do for God.⁴⁷⁵

Before the invention of the term 'Hong Kong Hauerwasian', Huen's best-known connection with Hauerwas was his translation of the latter's book *Prayers Plainly Spoken*, under the Chinese title *Daogao bushi weishu: Fanpuguizhen de qidao (Prayer Is Not a Fallacy: A Prayer Back to Basics)*, for which he was awarded a prize for the best translation of a non-academic book at the seventh Hong Kong Protestant Golden Book Awards in 2015, by the Association of Christian Publishers.⁴⁷⁶

Vincent Lau, another Hong Kong Hauerwasian, is Assistant Professor of Practical Theology at the HKBTS, concentrating on Christian ethics. He obtained his Master of Divinity at the HKBTS, a Master of Theology at Duke Divinity School, and his doctorate at New College, University of Edinburgh in 2005.⁴⁷⁷ The topic of his PhD dissertation was 'From Periphery to Partnership: A Critical Analysis of the Relationship of Baptists in Hong Kong with the Colonial

in Hong Kong in 2019 was HKD18,325 (GBP 1805) per month. For the detailed figures, see '2019/20 Administrative Officer / Executive Officer II / Assistant Labour Officer II / Assistant Trade Officer II / Transport Officer II Recruitment Exercises', Civil Service Bureau, updated 8 October 2019, <https://www.csb.gov.hk/english/grade/ao/447.html>; 'Chinese University of Hong Kong Research Assistant Monthly Pay', Glassdoor, updated 26 October 2019, https://www.glassdoor.co.uk/Monthly-Pay/Chinese-University-of-Hong-Kong-Research-Assistant-Hong-Kong-Monthly-Pay-EJI_IE296337.0,31_KO32,50_IL.51,60_IN106.htm?countryRedirect=true; Shen, 'Shenme ren fangwen shenme ren'.

⁴⁷⁵ Shen, 'Shenme ren fangwen shenme ren'.

⁴⁷⁶ Association of Christian Publishers, 'Daogao bushi weishu: Fanpuguizhen de qipao—zui jia fanyi (fei xueshu) de jiang zuopin' [Prayers are Not Playwords: The Return of Plain Prayers—Book Award for the Best (Non-Academic) Translation], 22 October 2015, <https://acpbookawards.hk/2015/10/22/2015-btna-1/>.

⁴⁷⁷ 'Vincent Lau', Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed 18 November 2019, <https://www.hkbts.edu.hk/Common/Reader/News/ShowNews.jsp?Nid=17542&Pid=54&Version=0&Cid=558&Charset=iso-8859-1>.

Government in the Post–World War II Era’, in which John H. Yoder’s (1927–1997) theology is employed to analyse the witness of Baptist churches as a community.⁴⁷⁸ He was a pastoral consultant between 2007 and 2014.⁴⁷⁹

The third Hong Kong Hauerwasian we discuss in this chapter is Andres Tang, Professor of Christian Thought (theology and culture) at the HKBTS since 2003.⁴⁸⁰ He finished his Master of Divinity at the China Graduate School of Theology (CGST) and a Master in Philosophy at the CUHK under the supervision of Mou Zongsan (1909–1995), a New Confucian philosopher. He completed his doctoral studies in 1994 at the University of St. Andrews with the dissertation title ‘God’s History in the Theology of Jürgen Moltmann’. Since receiving his PhD, he has worked at the CGST (1994–1996) and at the Lutheran Theological Seminary (LTS; 1996–2003)—the latter located next to the hub of Sino-Christian theology in Hong Kong, the Institute of Sino-Christian Studies—before moving to the HKBTS. Tang’s educational background in Christianity and Confucianism, along with his teaching and research experience at the LTS, allows him to engage Christianity with Chinese philosophy and Chinese culture.⁴⁸¹

It is noteworthy that, although all three Hong Kong Hauerwasians teach at the official seminary of the BCHK, their voices do not represent this denomination famous for its democratic polity.⁴⁸² Since they are so visible to the Christian population in Hong Kong, however, they have become the *de facto* representatives of Hauerwas’s discourse. Hence,

⁴⁷⁸ Vincent Lau, ‘From Periphery to Partnership: A Critical Analysis of the Relationship of Baptists in Hong Kong with the Colonial Government in the Post–World War II Era’, PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2005.

⁴⁷⁹ Luk Hoi-man, ‘Chai jie jiaohui mu yang weiji, danren. Liu Zhenpeng tan ruhe dai lai “ling di tupo”’ [Tackle the Pastoral Crisis in the Church, Serving. Lau Chun-pang Discusses How to Bring a Breakthrough out of Zero], *Jidu ribao* [*Gospel Herald*], 14 November 2014, <https://bit.ly/2Xoh71M>.

⁴⁸⁰ Andres Tang, ‘Wo zhe sanshi nianlai de gushi (Er fei shenxue)’ [My Story in These Thirty Years (and Not Theology)], *Youren xie zi* [*The Writing People*], 13 September 2014, <https://bit.ly/36Res5c>.

⁴⁸¹ Tang, ‘Wo zhe sanshi nianlai de gushi’.

⁴⁸² This is also highlighted in Tang’s book *Zhengzhi zhong de jiaohui* [*The Church in Politics*], which states that every believer (by which he means member) is responsible for the church community. For details, see Andres Tang, *Zhengzhi zhong de jiaohui* [*The Church in Politics*] (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers, 2015), 135–136.

analysing their views of Hauerwas's social ethics is another way to understand the general perception of Hauerwas's theology in Hong Kong.

The Hong Kong Hauerwasians are mainly oriented towards the church, as one of the three publics, and its relation to society, another public. Moreover, as they are lecturers at a seminary in Hong Kong, their main emphasis is on providing theological education for the future clergy, as opposed to publishing theological research, as is dominant among the academics discussed in Chapter 3. Therefore, I perceive that the Hong Kong Hauerwasians position themselves as church theologians rather than as academic theologians, as part of the larger groups I discussed in Chapter 4.

The Rise of Hong Kong Hauerwasians and the Election of the Selection Committee for the Chief Executive of Hong Kong

The 2014 election of the selection committee for the Chief Executive of Hong Kong is considered to have indirectly created the term 'Hong Kong Hauerwasians'. Despite the existence of such term back in 2012,⁴⁸³ this label was reaffirmed by the opponents of Huen, Lau, and Tang to dispute their encouragement to Protestant leaders to sign a petition to abandon the Protestant sector's ten votes in the selection committee. By 29 October 2014, in the midst of the Umbrella Movement, 152 Protestant leaders had signed the petition.⁴⁸⁴

⁴⁸³ For details, see Ku Pan, 'Jidujiao zhengzhi zhi di san tiao lu tantao' [An Evaluation of the Third Way of Christian Politics], *Piaoliu zhizuo* [Diaspora Production], Facebook, 9 December 2012, <https://bit.ly/3bh640H>; Ku Pan, 'Houhuoshi qiji' [The Hauerwas Miracle], *Piaoliu zhizuo* [Diaspora Production], Facebook, 9 November 2015, <https://bit.ly/2wRoKVO>.

⁴⁸⁴ Some notable figures included the Lutheran theologian Kung Lap-yan, the Christian and Missionary Alliance theologian Kwok Wai-luen and the Methodist historian Ying Fuk-tsang. Christians Keep Watch HK, 'Jidujiao jie dui Liang Zhenying xiansheng yanlun de huiying' [The Response from the Protestant Sector to the Speech of Leung Chun-ying], Go Petition, 29 October 2014, <https://bit.ly/3chq2Iw>.

John Chan, Assistant Professor of Theology at the Alliance Bible Seminary, the official seminary of the Christian and Missionary Alliance,⁴⁸⁵ opposed the three, defining a Hong Kong Hauerwasian as one who:

...perceives that the church, as a minority community who follows Christ, she does not expect, does not require and in fact finds it impossible to gain acceptance from the world. Hence, the church's political ethics is not to alter the current political situation—the church does not expect, does not require, and will find it impossible to rely on herself to cause the coming of God's kingdom. The church does not directly participate in political actions because political actions in any political system can lead to Constantinianism—the mistakes that expand the Christian values into a social level. The Hong Kong Hauerwasian considers this as unnecessary. Instead, the Hong Kong Hauerwasian asserts that the church can testify God through witnesses in daily life.⁴⁸⁶

Despite the imposition of the term on them, only Huen considered himself Hauerwasian, as stated in the foreword of his monograph *Writing with Hauerwas*: 'I call myself a Hauerwasian because of the convenience for writing, that I have the license to plagiarize, which is to say, to appropriate Hauerwas's thought [in my writing] and not be required to reference it every time'.⁴⁸⁷ Lau, as a scholar of John Yoder, may be considered sympathetic to Hauerwas, while Tang's work on Jürgen Moltmann is perhaps the most removed of the three from Hauerwas.⁴⁸⁸

⁴⁸⁵ 'Dr. John Chan Wai-on', Alliance Bible Seminary, accessed 18 September 2019, <https://bit.ly/2vPzvr0>.

⁴⁸⁶ Note that Chan did use 'she' as the pronoun for the church. For details, see John Chan, 'Weihe wo xihuan Gangshi naicha duoyu Gangshi Houpai? (1)' [Why Do I Like Hong Kong Styled Milk Tea More than Hong Kong Hauerwasians? (1)], *Shidai luntan* [Christian Times], 9 July 2015, <https://bit.ly/32WJxkJ>.

⁴⁸⁷ Note that he used American English, such as 'to plagiarize', for some of his English translations in the Chinese paragraphs. Huen, *Shehui lunli*, xvi.

⁴⁸⁸ Notably, while Tang emphasises of Moltmann's influence on his own thought, he does not mention Hauerwas as someone who shaped his theology. Instead, he names Confucian scholars Mou Zongsan and Chan Wing-cheuk as the first two who brought him to further theological study. Tang, 'Wo zhe sanshi nianlai de gushi'.

Because of the discussions on whether the Protestant sector should abandon their ten votes, John Chan initiated a number of posts on his Facebook page *Shenxue shi fenhong se de qiu* (*Theology is a pink autumn*) to elaborate upon his disagreement with the proposal from the Hong Kong Hauerwasians to abandon the votes, which led to a blog exchange between him and the Hong Kong Hauerwasians. These exchanges and a series of articles co-written by Huen, Lau, and Tang serve as the background for understanding the Hong Kong Hauerwasians' political views, as well as their interpretation of Hauerwas's theology.

First of all, it should be stated that the Hong Kong Hauerwasians do not merely use Hauerwas's theology in their writings. In 2011, Huen, Lau, and Tang co-wrote a two-part article for *Christian Times*, one of the most popular Protestant newspapers in Hong Kong, entitled 'Should Protestants Participate in Election for Small Groups? A Theological Reflection and a Church's Application' (*Jidutu ying fou canyu xiao quanzi xuanju?: Shenxue fanxing yu jiaohui shijian*).⁴⁸⁹ This article employs Yoder's criticism of the Constantinian shift to discuss how unhelpful it would be if the church allied with the state, which they considered 'the fallen powers'.⁴⁹⁰ The Hong Kong Hauerwasians' primary concern is the dichotomy between the obedience to the state and to Christ, for the partnership between the church and the state may cause the former to share the 'fallenness' of the latter.⁴⁹¹ While the Hong Kong Hauerwasians use Hauerwas's quote 'let the church be the church'⁴⁹² in their arguments for the church's faithfulness and truthfulness, they develop their reasoning through Yoder's discourse instead of

⁴⁸⁹ Freeman Huen, Vincent Lau, and Andres Tang, 'Jidutu ying fou canyu xiao quanzi xuanju?: Shenxue fanxing yu jiaohui shijian (Shang), (Xia)' [Should Protestants Participate in Election for Small Groups?: A Theological Reflection and a Church's Application], *Shidai luntan* [*Christian Times*], 18 and 26 September 2011, <https://bit.ly/36vWgh6>; <https://bit.ly/33oAz0o>.

⁴⁹⁰ Huen, Lau, and Tang, 'Jidutu ying fou canyu xiao quanzi xuanju?'.

⁴⁹¹ Huen, Lau, and Tang, 'Jidutu ying fou canyu xiao quanzi xuanju?'.

⁴⁹² Stanley Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), 99.

Hauerwas's.⁴⁹³ For them, since the current political system has no ability to do good works or act justly (*meiyou bingong xianshan de nengli*), the church should not have any expectations of the state, lest it be brought down by the state due to the latter's fallenness.⁴⁹⁴

Chan's major criticism of Hong Kong Hauerwasianism is his disagreement with their eschatology, and in particular with their interpretation of the relationship between the church and the world. For Chan, the church has the duty to alter the world because of Jesus's commandment—to spread the gospel and to love their neighbour as themselves. It is not a substitution for God's kingdom, nor is it a salvation of the world. Instead, the church's action is a testimony, because the church believes that God's kingdom will be 'on earth as it is in heaven' (Matthew 6:10). Referring to Karl Barth's *Church Dogmatics* IV/4, chapter 78, Chan states that,

while Christians should pray for the coming of new earth and new heaven through God's justice, their actions should live out their prayers to fulfil their management of justice on earth. In other words, to protect, renew, deepen, and widen the human right and freedom protected by the Lord, as well as peace on earth.⁴⁹⁵

Therefore, Chan argues that Christians should not abandon the possibility that reality may change in the future. Due to the eschatological hope given by God, Christians should fight for a better future.⁴⁹⁶

To respond to Chan's critique and to further construct their arguments, Huen, Lau, and Tang co-authored an article in October 2015 in *Christian Times*, called 'The Ethics, Theology, and the Testimony of Baptists—A Humble Reply to Dr Chan Wai-on Regarding the Ten Votes

⁴⁹³ Huen, Lau, and Tang, 'Jidutu ying fou canyu xiao quanzi xuanju?'

⁴⁹⁴ Huen, Lau, and Tang, 'Jidutu ying fou canyu xiao quanzi xuanju?'

⁴⁹⁵ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, vol. IV, pt. 4 (London: T&T Clark, 1981), 233–259; John Chan, 'Weihe wo xihuan Gangshi naicha duoyu Gangshi Houpai? (3)' [Why Do I Like Hong Kong Styled Milk Tea More than Hong Kong Hauerwasian? (3)], *Shidai luntan* [*Christian Times*], 23 July 2015, <https://bit.ly/2NCbFUI>.

⁴⁹⁶ Chan, 'Weihe wo xihuan Gangshi naicha duoyu Gangshi Houpai? (3).'

in the Selection Committee' (*Xin jin zhe de lunli, shenxue, jianzheng—jiu xuanwei shi xi, jing fu Chen Wei'an boshi*).⁴⁹⁷ Despite the natural assumption that the Hong Kong Hauerwasians would use Hauerwas's theology to justify their position, they used James William McClendon Jr's (1924–2000) theory to support their 'baptist' eschatology and complement their Hauerwasian view. Following McClendon's usage, Huen, Lau, and Tang used the lowercase 'baptist'⁴⁹⁸ to affirm their vision—that 'the church now is the primitive church and the church on judgment day'.⁴⁹⁹ That is, the present church should be as mission-oriented as the apostolic church so that it is a succession of the primitive church, and this mission-oriented mindset will be continued in the church until the judgment day. Thus, the Hong Kong Hauerwasians argued that the church community should 'perform "the word of life" through the stories of the gospel' (*Shi hang chu fuyin gushi de 'shengming zhidao'*).⁵⁰⁰

Advancing their belief in the church's witness, Huen states that 'the world thinks that it does not need the church, just as the world thought that it does not need God; but the world indeed needs the church, so that it can perceive itself as world'.⁵⁰¹ Here he emphasises Hauerwas's famous quote—'let the church be the church' so that 'the world can be the world'—as a way to defend the importance of being Jesus's witness on earth. This refers to Hauerwas's view in *The Peaceable Kingdom* that the church must be faithful to Jesus's teaching and follow the example of Christ, as through the testimony of the church, the world can understand itself

⁴⁹⁷ Since there is an updated version of the 2015 *Christian Times* article in Huen's monograph *Shehui· lunli: Du xie Houhuoshi* [Title in English on colophon: *Writing with Hauerwas: Essays on Social Ethic*], all citations of this article will be based on Huen's monograph. Huen, *Shehui· lunli*, 243–279.

⁴⁹⁸ This is shown through English translation.

⁴⁹⁹ James William McClendon Jr., *Ethics: Systematic Theology*, Volume 1 (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012), 31.

⁵⁰⁰ Here Huen uses the term 'apostolic church', but he has not elaborated what he meant by this. Huen, *Shehui· lunli*, 247.

⁵⁰¹ Huen, *Shehui· lunli*, 253.

more as world and comprehend the social ethics of the church.⁵⁰² The church's intentional separation from the world is for the sake of the world, so that one day, the world can be attracted by the church, which lives truthfully to the gospel.⁵⁰³

This sets the theological ground for the Hong Kong Hauerwasians to consider not only the election of the Chief Executive but also the selection method of the ten representatives in the Protestant sector (which was usually decided by the Hong Kong Christian Council [HKCC], an ecumenical organisation in Hong Kong) to be unjust.⁵⁰⁴ The candidates for the ten representatives in this sector were usually nominated by their own denominations so that the nominated candidates could participate in the final process of random selection by the HKCC. It is worth noting that the denominations involved in the election included those which were not members of the HKCC, as not all denominations in Hong Kong agree with the ecumenical view of the HKCC. For the Hong Kong Hauerwasians, the process of selecting these ten candidates was already unjust, since not all members of the denominations were involved in the selection process, but only well-established churches, and excluding independent churches.⁵⁰⁵ Furthermore, although the HKCC was responsible for the election in the Protestant sector, it had no authority over how individual denominations selected or nominated their candidates for this election. Hong Kong Hauerwasians argued that changing the whole election system based on a non-governmental organisation (NGO) whose founding purpose was to focus on ecumenical

⁵⁰² Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, 99–100.

⁵⁰³ Huen, *Shehui lunli*, 254.

⁵⁰⁴ Li Tong-yan, 'Xuanweizhan: Jidujiao xuanwei shixi chouqian; shenggonghui Guan Haoming luoxuan' [Result of Selection Committee: Random Selection of the Committees in Protestant Sector; Anglican Peter Koon Lost in the Battle], *HK01*, 19 November 2016, <https://bit.ly/34rRcZj>.

⁵⁰⁵ Major Protestant denominations and institutions include the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China, the Hong Kong Methodist Church, and the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui, as well as the Tao Fong Shan Christian Centre. For details, see Hong Kong Christian Council, 'Huiyuan jiaohui/ jigou mingdan' [Member Church/ Institution List], accessed 18 April 2020, <https://bit.ly/3bivLOo>.

dialogue seemed to be unfair to the HKCC.⁵⁰⁶ Because of this imperfect selection system, Hong Kong Hauerwasians suggested that Protestant leaders should abandon the ten votes they had, as a testimony to both Christians and non-Christians in Hong Kong society.⁵⁰⁷

The view of Huen, Tang, and Lau sparked huge debates online, both within and outside of the church, because it opposed the general political trend of Hong Kong citizens, who usually preferred to take as many votes as possible for pro-democracy parties.⁵⁰⁸ Moreover, it is noteworthy that this debate happened one year after the start of the Umbrella Movement, so the general public was eager to vote for another Chief Executive in order to prevent events similar to the Movement from occurring again. Aligning with the view of the general public, John Chan supported the Protestant leaders who remained in the selection committee, as a testimony in the political sector. Arguing against the political view of Hong Kong Hauerwasians, Chan stated that the problem of Hong Kong churches was not that they had not been churches but that the separation of political life and daily life had led to political apathy, suggesting that the Hong Kong Hauerwasians' lack of interest in Hong Kong politics had led to their erroneous argument about Protestants abstaining from voting in the selection committee.⁵⁰⁹ Although Chan also considered the election system imperfect, he encouraged Protestant leaders to continue to participate in voting as part of their duty as Hong Kong citizens.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁶ Huen, *Shehui· lunli*, 261–262.

⁵⁰⁷ Huen, *Shehui· lunli*, 257.

⁵⁰⁸ Although in the Hong Kong voting system, there are no dominant parties for either the republicans or the democrats, there are trends that republican or democratic parties tend to group together to vote for certain social and political issues. Hence, choosing to vote for any democratic party means an endorsement of the democratic side. On the political spectrum in Hong Kong, see Clement York-kee So, 'Xianggang zhengzhi qunti de quxiang yitong he bankuai piaoyi' [The Similar or Different Orientations of Hong Kong Political Groups and Their Plate Tectonics], *Ming Pao*, 31 October 2019, <https://bit.ly/2RL8qNh>.

⁵⁰⁹ Chan, 'Weihe wo xihuan Gangshi naicha duoyu Gangshi Houpai? (1)'.

⁵¹⁰ Chan, 'Weihe wo xihuan Gangshi naicha duoyu Gangshi Houpai? (1)'.

It is noteworthy that the statement in the petition is not Hauerwasian at all. Instead, the petition sought to challenge the two inappropriate claims of Leung Chun-ying (b. 1954), Chief Executive of Hong Kong (2012–2017), that (1) ‘if civil nomination of the candidates was available, the social policy would favour the grassroots citizens who had HKD 14,000 (GBP 1383) or less monthly salary’, and that (2) ‘even the religious sector had no contribution to Hong Kong economics, but it was still allowed to participate in the voting system to fulfil the purpose of fair participation’.⁵¹¹ The petition further declared that every civil citizen should have the right to vote, as a fundamental value to modern society.⁵¹² The petition requested for Leung to retract his offensive comments and emphasised that everyone has the political right to vote. Therefore, it is arguable whether this petition was truly based on Hauerwas’s theology. Although Hauerwas encourages an alternative Christian witness, does abandoning the votes in the Protestant sector necessarily represent a Hauerwasian thought?

Their approach may prompt readers to ask: to what extent must one disengage oneself from the public sphere, or under what criteria can one assess a political system as unjust and withdraw from its voting system? Moreover, since Hong Kong has never had a democratic election⁵¹³ for its Chief Executive or even for the governor of Hong Kong in its colonial era, does this imply that Protestants should never vote or participate in elections, because, according to Hong Kong Hauerwasians, the system is unjust? Furthermore, if a Protestant decided to abandon his or her vote in order to testify to God, what further actions, in addition to abstaining from voting, must he or she take to be Christ’s witness, and will this not be perceived as passive aggressive?

⁵¹¹ Christians Keep Watch HK, ‘Jidujiao jie dui Liang Zhenying xiansheng yanlun de huiying’.

⁵¹² Christians Keep Watch HK, ‘Jidujiao jie dui Liang Zhenying xiansheng yanlun de huiying’.

⁵¹³ According to Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, democratic election is ‘competitive, periodic, inclusive, definitive elections in which the chief decision-makers in a government are selected by citizens who enjoy broad freedom to criticize government, to publish their criticisms, and to present alternatives’. For details see Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, ‘Democratic Elections and Democratic Government’, *World Affairs* 147, 2 (Fall 1984): 61–69.

For Huen, in order to avoid being tempted by this system, one should detach oneself from this system, according to the Lord's Prayer: 'do not bring them to the time of trial, but rescue them from the evil system' (citing Matthew 6:13).⁵¹⁴ Although Huen claims that he does not intend to forbid political activities among Christians, and states that any Christian can participate in politics as long as one declares Christ as the Lord and fulfils one's role as an apostle of Jesus, his arguments remain ambiguous. For example, if he believes that the political system in Hong Kong is unjust and that the ten votes can be utilised by the political parties, under what kind of voting system could an elected Protestant representative vote for the Chief Executive again? His approach seems to create more questions than answers, or perhaps shows criticism toward Protestants instead of being a witness for Christ.

Huen's Concept of Separation of Church and State:

A Baptist View or a Hauerwasian View?

Among the three Hong Kong Hauerwasians, only Huen has elaborated his view of separation of church and state in his writings. In addition to Huen's endorsement of Hauerwas, as we have observed, his attempt to develop his theology through his Baptist position is evident; hence, one may argue that his interpretation of Hauerwas's theology is situated in his (Baptist) church, and not entirely through Hauerwas's ecclesiology. Later in this chapter, one may observe that he intends to follow the model of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) to develop a theory regarding separation of church and state, based on the church-state relationship established in Hong Kong.

⁵¹⁴ Huen, *Shehui· lunli*, 265.

Similar to the perspective of the Christian Sentinels of Hong Kong (*Jidutu Xianggang shouwang she*) discussed in Chapter 1, for Huen, the separation of church and state does not imply political apathy or disengagement from politics. On the contrary, in his article ‘Reflection on the Separation of Church and State’ (*Zhengjiao fenli de zaisi*) published in *Christian Times* in July 2015, Huen proposed that

...whether we [as Christians] are interested in secular politics, Christians should try to comprehend politics and have the responsibility to do so. Such an understanding helps them to comprehend the life of the masses—from the scarcity, the dissatisfaction, and the misfortune they encounter in their daily lives to their experience of oppression, exploitation, and alienation caused by the social system. In this way, it assists both pastoral care in the church and evangelism outside the church.⁵¹⁵

In this article published around half a year after the Umbrella Movement, his comments are directly related to the Movement to tackle the disharmony within churches. He claims that, in those days, one of the problems regarding the separation of church and state was that the congregations misunderstood the state as politics and believed that involvement in politics as Christians would violate this principle. Huen stated that it was common for pastors in Hong Kong to assert obedience to the authorities in order to avoid violating the rule of separation of church and state.⁵¹⁶ He added that this would prohibit the concept of fellowship in the church, which is to share burdens with one another.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁵ Freeman Huen, ‘Zhengjiao fenli de zaisi’ [Reflection on the Separation of Church and State], *Shidai luntan* [*Christian Times*], 3 July 2015, <https://bit.ly/2NeLfJn>.

⁵¹⁶ Freeman Huen, “‘Zhan Zhong’ yu gongmin kangming: Jidutu lunli bianzhi de yiqi shifan (2)’ [‘Occupy Central’ and Civil Disobedience: An Example of Identifying Christian Ethics (2)], *Shidai luntan* [*Christian Times*], 21 August 2013, <http://christiantimes.org.hk/Common/Reader/News/ShowNews.jsp?Nid=79514&Pid=2&Version=1356&Cid=959&Charset=big5hkscs>.

⁵¹⁷ Huen, ‘Zhengjiao fenli de zaisi’.

This kind of interpretation of separation of church and state generated another problem—the political neutrality among Protestant churches in Hong Kong. Huen indicated that political neutrality did not equate to a lack of concern with politics, nor was it a prohibition on criticising the government. Rather, he interpreted the separation of church and state as the separation from partisan politics, meaning that churches should not support particular political parties during the election period or invite a political candidate to Sunday Service to publicise his or her campaign. The reason for this is that some parties may attempt to appeal to the Christian faith in order to gain support from churches, but as a result, the churches may end up becoming puppets controlled by political parties that lead them to follow non-Christian principles.⁵¹⁸ Note that such a proposal is different from the SBC in the United States, which has in recent decades tended to endorse Republicans. For example, Vice President Mike Pence was invited to speak at the 2018 SBC annual meeting, which would probably not happen in the BCHK, a denomination claimed to originate from the SBC.⁵¹⁹

Different from the Christian Sentinel of Hong Kong, though, is Huen's assertion that the separation of church and state should not be used by the church to lobby the government for religious freedom. For Huen,

...if the separation of church and state is a slogan from the church to the government to fight for religious freedom, it is merely a belief and is not a faith principle that guides all Christ's disciples to fulfil the [Christian] ethics in the world. This shallow principle (or a

⁵¹⁸ Huen, ““Zhan Zhong” yu gongmin kangming: Jidutu lunli bianshi de yiqi shifan (Xia)” [‘Occupy Central’ and Civil Disobedience: An Example of Identifying Christian Ethics], *Shidai luntan* [Christian Times], 21 August 2013, <https://bit.ly/36EVdeL>.

⁵¹⁹ Dalia Fahmy, ‘7 Facts About Southern Baptists’, *Pew Research Center*, 7 June 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/06/07/7-facts-about-southern-baptists/>; for the history of the BCHK, see Chapter 1.

principle without an ideal goal) only demands that the government to do (or not do) certain things, but it does not require the church itself to do (or not do) certain things.⁵²⁰

Huen's claim seems to be opposed to the rhetoric of Hong Kong Protestants in 1984, when several leaders flew to Beijing to fight for religious freedom due to their belief in the separation of church and state. As discussed in Chapter 1, the delegation held this principle to protect the church from encroachment by the state, not vice versa. With this approach, the state has no authority over religious organisations, but religious persons can speak into the state. It is arguable whether Huen claims are self-contradictory. While he approved the American notion of the separation of church and state in the United States due to the protection of religions from political interference, he does not consider this to be related to religious freedom—for him, separation of church and state is merely a constitutional concept and a 'work in progress',⁵²¹ which is constantly debated between Republicans and Democrats in the United States in order to increase their bargaining power. The federal government still intervenes in religious organisations by funding faith-based initiatives, which, for him, does not follow the idea of the separation of church and state.⁵²²

In order to bring the concept of separation of church and state back to a theological level that may guide the congregation, Huen argues that the true meaning of such a separation is to be a disciple of Jesus Christ:

The church should reaffirm the separation of church and state as a core principle of its belief because its theological foundation is about 'Christ being the Lord'.... One cannot serve two masters, because any authority on earth is not our Lord. Christians can obey the

⁵²⁰ Huen, "'Zhan Zhong" yu gongmin kangming'.

⁵²¹ Huen, 'Zhengjiao fenli de zaisi'.

⁵²² Here I would oppose his view that the United States is not secularised—indeed, the purpose of the separation of church and state is to create a secularised society. Huen, 'Zhengjiao fenli de zaisi'.

authority (without using violence to overthrow the latter), but they should not be loyal to it. Thus, the separation of church and state, as a faith principle, is to remind the church to critically keep a distance from the regime. The church does not have to be the authority's enemy, and it can even cooperate with the government for the sake of the weak and the masses.... However, the church should seek to avoid the temptation of power.⁵²³

For Huen, the church should serve its role according to Christ's teaching—that is, to spread the good news of God and imitate Jesus's servanthood on earth. Huen suggested that politics could not be solely altered by the church and was not the only duty of the church, which instead should concentrate on witnessing to Christ and caring for the poor.⁵²⁴

Regarding Huen's view of the separation of church and state, my doubt is perhaps related to his denial of its relation to religious freedom and his emphasis on 'Christ being the Lord' in this separation. Such a denial seems to misunderstand the separation of church and state in the historical context of the development of the United States, since the penning of the First Amendment to the Constitution,⁵²⁵ and also the fact that the BCHK's emphasises its origin in the SBC,⁵²⁶ which stresses an American understanding of this concept. Although evangelicals would tend to agree on 'Christ being the Lord' as an essential teaching of Christianity, strictly speaking, this teaching has nothing to do with the concept of the separation of church and state, nor is it in the First Amendment. Huen's interpretation seems problematic to me, as it loses the essence behind the First Amendment's religious freedom mandate that led to the implementation of

⁵²³ Huen, 'Zhengjiao Fenli De Zaisi'.

⁵²⁴ Huen, *Shehui lunli*, 90–93.

⁵²⁵ For details, see John Witte Jr., 'That Serpentine Wall of Separation between Church and State', in *God's Joust, God's Justice: Law and Religion in the Western Tradition* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2006), 214–220; Beatrice Leung and Chan Shun-hing, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong, 1950–2000* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 11–14.

⁵²⁶ 'Jin hui lishi' [The Baptist History], Hong Kong Baptist Convention, accessed 5 February 2020, <https://bit.ly/373KARI>.

separation of church and state in the United States—namely, the resistance of the Founding Fathers, many of whom were influenced by Deism, or separatists like the early Puritan colonists, two groups who were against having a national religion like the Church of England. The church and state relationship as established under the British colonial rule of Hong Kong, as expounded in Chapter 1, is quite different from the history in the United States. This raises questions about how closely this concept should follow its historical context in the United States, and how it is reinterpreted as a concept outside its original context. Regarding Huen's position, one might also ask whether his approach is genuinely Hauerwasian, or leans in a different direction.

Nevertheless, Huen did lay out Hauerwas's approval for Christians to participate in politics as Christians. For example, he comments:

Hauerwas did not discourage believers to distance themselves from secular politics; instead, he encouraged them to participate in politics. [In a general situation,] Christians not only can vote according to their civil rights, but they can also join the government to be civil servants. The main reason for his pacifist approach is that not all nations use violence directly, so Christians do not have to avoid [the government]. Moreover, Christians should take the responsibility to correct the regime from over-relying on brutality and violence as a governing tool.... However, as Hauerwas and Yoder stress, Christians should participate in politics as Christians, and should not give up their loyalty to the Lord once they have entered into the public sphere.⁵²⁷

Ironically, although Huen self-endorsed as Hong Kong Hauerwasian, he criticised Hauerwas for not being sectarian enough:

⁵²⁷ Huen, *Shehui lunli*, 131–132.

Some of Hauerwas's supporters [implicitly including Huen himself] consider Hauerwas's position 'not sectarian enough', if the meaning of sectarianism is to build an alternative, which is to say, to build another social system and to propose disobedience to the secular authority. One of the reasons [for the criticism] is that Hauerwas still compromises too much to authority and is too willing to enjoy the privilege as a civil citizen and has not reflected or declined [the benefit of] the civil responsibility. Voting is a basic civil right, but this behaviour implies the endorsement of a democratic voting system, as well as the moral commitment to a democratic election and the nation that implements the election.... He omits how the regime works for capitalism, but the monopoly of the market economy and its enforcing power are no less than the visible violence imposed by the monopolistic regime.⁵²⁸

Huen puts forward his own opinion that not all forms of politics are suitable for Christians participation. His standpoint is that even in the United States, which he perceives as truly democratic and 'relatively just' (*xiangdui gongyi*), Hauerwas must carefully consider how he, or other Christians, participates in politics. Hence, Hong Kong Christians should be more conscious of their political involvement, since they are immersed in a 'non-Chinese, yet non-Western' society, which still has a long way to go to become fully democratic.⁵²⁹ Therefore, he advises Christians not to be involved in political parties—not only to avoid participating in certain campaigns but also to consider not taking politics on as a career, especially in an unjust political system.⁵³⁰

⁵²⁸ Huen, *Shehui lunli*, 132–133.

⁵²⁹ Although Huen intends to imply that American society is better than Hong Kong's—that is, that a democratic society is better than a non-democratic one—he comments that 'the essence [of a nation] is all the same—that it has the right to kill its citizens'. Huen, *Shehui lunli*, 133.

⁵³⁰ Huen, *Shehui lunli*, 131–135.

Aligned with this logic of the separation of church and state, both Huen and Lau have proposed a total refusal of government funding to Baptist schools. As noted in Chapter 1, during the 1960s, the government and several Protestant churches were in a partnership model of education: the former supplied the land and funded the schools, while the latter operated the schools. This was perceived as a win-win situation because the state could leave religious organisations to manage education institutions, while the church could receive financial support from the state to advance evangelism through educational institutions, considering the lack of funding among missionary agencies in Hong Kong during the 1960s.⁵³¹ Huen, however, argued that this partnership model was the root cause of the ambiguous relationship between church and state which violates Christian discipleship. For example, schools in the 2010s had no choice but to put the PRC flag on their buildings to represent loyalty to the state. Huen commented that this would give the perception that the government, not Christ, was the Lord of Baptist schools.⁵³² Similar to Huen, Lau considered it a violation of the idea of the separation of church and state for Christian schools to receive a subsidy from the government. Lau praised the testimony of house churches for their determination in not joining the Three-Self Patriotic Movement—that is, the state-sanctioned church—while committing to Christian education.⁵³³ According to Lau, Baptist schools should follow the example of house churches in their operation of schools—to separate from the government, including its subsidies, as a testimony to the world.⁵³⁴

With respect to the proposal of such a separation between Baptist schools and the government, I suspect it can be difficult in Hong Kong. Most Hong Kong primary and secondary

⁵³¹ Leung and Chan, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong*, 21; Eppie Yuk-ming Wong, 'The Social Participation of the Hong Kong Churches, 1966–1997' (PhD diss., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2006), 84–90.

⁵³² Huen, "'Zhan Zhong" yu gongmin kangming'.

⁵³³ Lau, 'From Periphery to Partnership', 301–313.

⁵³⁴ Lau, 'From Periphery to Partnership', 305–316.

school students attend government-subsidised schools. For instance, in 2015, 73 per cent of primary schools in Hong Kong were subsidised, and another six per cent of schools were established by the government. As a result, around 79 per cent of schools were directly or indirectly supported by the government so the students could enjoy free tuition. Therefore, there have been debates about whether private schools were only for the upper class because the majority could not afford the tuition fees.⁵³⁵ If the BCHK perceived evangelism as the main goal of Christian education, perhaps it would be difficult not to operate subsidised schools, unless their schools only evangelised the upper class.

With regards to Huen's perspective on democracy, it seems that, in contrast with the welcome attitude toward democracy in the BCHK due to its well-established democratic polity,⁵³⁶ Huen's attitude toward democracy is rather negative, whether in church or in politics. Therefore, even if one day the Hong Kong government upheld a stronger democratic regime, it seems that he would still prefer Christians to withdraw from politics to be the witnesses for God.

The Hong Kong Hauerwasians' View of Publicness

As shown in the last section, Hong Kong Hauerwasians deem finding common ground in a theological discussion unnecessary, despite seeking common ground with other religious and political groups being the main feature of public theology. Moreover, they also employ Hauerwas's ecclesiology to propose that it is unnecessary to draw a distinction between public

⁵³⁵ 'Zhi zi xuexiao zeng liang bei, pinfu qipaoxian la kai' [Schools in the Direct Subsidy Scheme Doubled, Social Equality Widened at the Starting Line], *Ming Pao*, 20 June 2017, <http://indepth.mingpao.com/php/passage.php?seriesno=18&titleno=1497894689389>.

⁵³⁶ For example, the statement of faith of the HKBTS emphasises that 'every Christian has the equal right and responsibility to serve the church ... although staff in the church, such as pastors and deacons, have special responsibility, this does not mean they have special role as priesthood. For details, see 'Jin xin hui xinyang yu ren xin—jin xin hui xinyang' [Baptist Faith and Belief—Baptist Faith], Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed 21 November 2019, <https://bit.ly/330T0aI>.

and private, implying that public theology is a redundant category for theology. While I disagree with such a statement, in that public theology exists for its own purpose, Hong Kong Hauerwasians distinguish a trend of theology against public theology. Comprehending their thoughts would aid in differentiating their understanding from Hauerwas's understanding of public theology. Conveniently, the three Hong Kong Hauerwasians have written on the subject of 'public theology' in a special issue of the HKBTS's journal *Hill Road* in 2013.

In Huen's opinion, it is unnecessary to articulate an explicit public theology. He comments that 'the church is public. It does not have to influence the public [sphere] to become public. If it has not left the public sphere at all, it does not have to return to the sphere'.⁵³⁷ Huen claims that the term 'public theology' is problematic because it implies the church is privatised and being excluded from society. For him, the division between public and private arose with liberalism, when 'public' became defined as something related to governmental issues that the state could handle or was responsible for, while issues outside of this category became privatised.⁵³⁸

Furthermore, he argues that public theology does not serve the purpose it claims to serve. For example, although public theology engages in dialogue in civil society, Huen reckons that civil society, despite its emphasis on creating a third space out of political coercion and capitalistic competition, is excessively idealistic because NGOs can be egocentric and do not simply promote the common good. In Chinese terms, he even labels civil society as imaginary or non-existent (*zuwu xuyou*)—an idiom implying the over-imagination of such an idea.⁵³⁹ As a result, Huen challenges Max Stackhouse's notions of public theology in terms of the latter's

⁵³⁷ Huen, 'Gonggong shenxue/ shui de "gonggong"?', 47.

⁵³⁸ Huen, 'Gonggong shenxue/ shui de "gonggong"?', 38–39.

⁵³⁹ Huen, 'Gonggong shenxue/ shui de "gonggong"?', 50–51; Ruo Ying, Zhao Zixu (Ed.), *Zhongguo changyong chengyu diangu mingyan gushi yuanliu cishu* [The Encyclopedia of the Origin of Chinese Common Idioms and Allusions] ("Xin qingnian" Zazhi she ["New Youth" Magazine], 1985), 199–200.

apolitical focus and the pursuit of transcendence in the civil society,⁵⁴⁰ because Huen considers civil society an imaginary space that would be unable to influence politics or develop an orderly society. For Huen, it is too idealistic for public theology to avoid power struggles and political violence in politics while requiring the church to seek recognition from the public.⁵⁴¹ Yet despite his disagreement with the term ‘public theology’, he ironically lists public theology as one of his research interests on his profile page on the HKBTS website.⁵⁴²

In contrast, Lau, using Yoder’s analysis of the book of Jeremiah in his *For the Nations*, observes that ‘for Yoder, theology should be public. Thus, it is unnecessary to add the adjective “public”, because non-public or private theology does not exist’.⁵⁴³ Here Lau explores Yoder’s interpretation of the exilic community in the book of Jeremiah in terms of how the community lived out the testimony of God. During the exilic period, the Jews did not have their own king and lived a counter-cultural life in a foreign land. Yoder perceives this kind of life as Israelites’ loyal response to the Lord, which he calls the ‘Jeremianic perspective’, since they chose to preserve their culture to worship their God in a foreign land.⁵⁴⁴ Lau then concludes that the core messages of *For the Nations* are twofold. Firstly, believers’ testimony should become the gospel for non-Christians in the world. Since they are a minority in a culture that may not support Christian principles, their testimony becomes the means of conveying the gospel to those around

⁵⁴⁰ Huen, ‘Gonggong shenxue/ shui de “gonggong”?’, 54–55.

⁵⁴¹ Huen, ‘Gonggong shenxue/ shui de “gonggong”?’, 53.

⁵⁴² Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary, ‘Freeman Huen’.

⁵⁴³ Vincent Lau, ‘Chutan Youda de Yelimi moshi—sikao qi lunli xue de yiyi ji qi “gonggong” xingzhi’ [A Preliminary Study of the Jeremianic Model of John Howard Yoder—Examining Its Ethical Meanings and “Public” Nature of His Theology], *Shandao qikan* [Hill Road] 31 (2013): 171.

⁵⁴⁴ John Howard Yoder, *For the Nations: Essays Evangelical and Public* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1997), 55; Lau, ‘Chutan Youda de Yelimi moshi’, 153.

them.⁵⁴⁵ Secondly, the essence of the church and of the gospel is public, because it should show its testimony to the world, and not simply withdraw.⁵⁴⁶

For Tang, a Protestant public theology should be a Christocentric ecclesiology, because the church is the only official place from which one can understand that God is active in different parts of God's creation.⁵⁴⁷ While Tang does not deny the necessity of public theology, he disapproves the methodology of public theology because it starts from the problems of discourses in the public sphere and not from Godself and God's action in the world. He suspects that without the intervention of doctrinal theology, public theology will merely become a subject under anthropology or epistemology.⁵⁴⁸ Arguing through William Cavanaugh's article 'Is Public Theology Really Public? Some Problems within Civil Society',⁵⁴⁹ Tang puts forward that 'a true public [sphere] should be those [citizens] who fulfil justice ... to devote [the things] which belong to God back to God'.⁵⁵⁰ An empire is not a true public sphere because it does not act justly and does not return to God the things that are God's.⁵⁵¹

Analysing the theologies of the three Hong Kong Hauerwasians demonstrates that (1) although their theology may have similarities with Hauerwas's, it is hard to strictly label them as Hauerwasians, since they have not quite employed his social ethics;⁵⁵² and (2) they all raise concerns that theology should be developed outwards from the church, and worry that public theology fails to achieve this.

⁵⁴⁵ Lau, 'Chutan Youda de Yelimi moshi', 157–160.

⁵⁴⁶ Lau, 'Chutan Youda de Yelimi moshi', 170–171.

⁵⁴⁷ Andres Tang, 'Gonggong shenxue, shenme yang de shenxue? Yixie genben de fansi' [Public Theology, What Theology? Some Radical Reflections], *Shandao qikan* [Hill Road] 31 (July 2013): 29.

⁵⁴⁸ Tang, 'Gonggong shenxue, shenme yang de shenxue?', 23–24.

⁵⁴⁹ William T. Cavanaugh, 'Is Public Theology Really Public? Some Problems within Civil Society', *The Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics* 21 (2001): 116.

⁵⁵⁰ Tang, 'Gonggong shenxue, shenme yang de shenxue?', 30.

⁵⁵¹ Tang, 'Gonggong shenxue, shenme yang de shenxue?', 30.

⁵⁵² This will be further discussed in Chapter 6.

With regards to most of the criticisms from the Hong Kong Hauerwasians, I would agree that, ideally, the church should be public and not merely deal with private matters.⁵⁵³ Indeed, as Hauerwas has suggested in *The Peaceable Kingdom*, the church is a social ethic; thus, one can only understand oneself and determine one's actions through interaction with others.⁵⁵⁴ However, the reality of the current situation in Hong Kong is that the church tends to hold the view that it should handle only the spiritual concerns of its members and not worldly issues, such as politics or its members' public lives. The reading of Hong Kong Hauerwasians seems to be too optimistic to the current situations of the church—denying the term 'public theology' does not mean that privatisation of the church does not exist in Hong Kong society. The problem I see in the Hong Kong context is that, since the church is obliged to register as an NGO (or a charitable institution in accounting terms), most Hong Kong citizens, and even regular attendees at Sunday Service, mistakenly consider the church as a private organisation⁵⁵⁵ that may have no responsibility for dealing with public matters.⁵⁵⁶

⁵⁵³ For Hauerwas, although he does not deny the use of the term 'public theology', he challenges the idea of civil religion and states that Christianity should not remain private nor should it relate merely to personal experience. For details, see Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, 12–15.

⁵⁵⁴ Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, 97.

⁵⁵⁵ According to section 88 of the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap 112 of the Laws of Hong Kong), organisations registered as charitable institutions can have tax exemption. Hence, many churches, including schools run by Christian organisations, are registered under this category to reduce operation cost. For details, see Inland Revenue Department, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, *Tax Guide for Charitable Institutions and Trusts of a Public Character*, September 2019, https://www.ird.gov.hk/eng/pdf/tax_guide_for_charities.pdf.

⁵⁵⁶ Therefore, a debate arose during the Umbrella Movement, and again in the current anti-extradition laws protests over whether churches should open their doors to the protesters being attacked by the police. There is a wide spectrum of approaches to handling this matter. For details, see Francis Yip, 'Yusan yundong yizhounian: Jiaohui de zaichang yu lichang [The Anniversary of the Umbrella Movement: The Presence and the Absence of the Church]', *Jiaohui zhinang [Church Think Tank]*, October 2015, https://www.theology.cuhk.edu.hk/tc/publication/church_think_tank/issue67/article; Lui Lai-sin, '6.12 Yi ge yue: You kaifang jiaohui dao sing hallelujah, yanxiao xia de hongzhuan shengdian' [One Month after 12 June: From Opening Churches to Sing Hallelujah, Red-bricked Churches under Tear Gas], *Pingguo ribao [Apple Daily]*, 12 July 2019, <https://hk.news.appledaily.com/local/realtime/article/20190712/59811425>; Yuen Tin-yau, 'Weiyu shizi lukou de jiaohui' [The Church on the Crossroad], *Pastoral Letter of the Methodist Church, Hong Kong*, 4 October 2014, https://www.methodist.org.hk/media/filehotlink/2014/10/03/Pastoral_Letter-141004.pdf.

In response to Huen's argument on the depravity of human beings, it is unavoidable that there are self-oriented people in every organisation; under the category of NGOs, however, this does not apply only to charity groups but can also happen within churches. If this logic is applied to churches, Huen's Christian ethics are not feasible either. One cannot be so fearful of developing a public theology because of human imperfection, whether such an imperfection is from the author himself or from the others in society. He argues that Sunday Service can be a public witness of the church, giving the example of Christian worship in the early churches, and that it thus illustrates the publicness of the church and of Christian belief.⁵⁵⁷ But I disagree with such a claim. The testimony shown in the early churches was a radical way of life because they only worshipped God the Father and not the other gods in Greco-Roman society. As the former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams argues, 'Christian identity [in the New Testament] is irreducibly political in the sense that it defines a *politeia*, a kind of citizenship.'⁵⁵⁸ For the early church, it was a radical testimony that disobeyed the laws in that society and had the potential consequence of legal punishment. Although Huen's assertion is developed from Hauerwas's phrase of 'letting church be church', Hauerwas's position is not only about the testimony of the church in public worship; it also involves one's testimony in the public sphere—that is, a public theology, which may or may not engage with politics. Huen seems to have a limited view of Hauerwas's theology which overlooks its public significance; as such, Huen's circumscribing of Hauerwas may not be helpful for the situation in Hong Kong.

As for Hauerwas's own opinions on public theology, since he argues that the church should be a social ethic and a composite 'we', and that the church can only learn about Christian life

⁵⁵⁷ Freeman Huen, 'Tantao chongbai jingbai benzhi: Fansi jiaohui gonggong jianzheng' [Examining the Essence of Worship: Reflecting the Public Witness of the Church], *Jidujiao zhoubao* [Christian Weekly], 2 June 2019, <http://www.christianweekly.net/2019/ta2037986.htm>.

⁵⁵⁸ Rowan Williams, *Faith in the Public Square* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 29.

through the interaction of other private 'I's.⁵⁵⁹ According to this logic, he would probably criticise the practice of Hong Kong churches that emphasise the privatisation of Christian faith. Although he may disagree with the term 'public theology' and prefer to use the term 'social ethic', the essence of his theology is still based on a public witness to society, which is composed of both Christians and non-Christians. This element will be elaborated during the discussion of Christian narrative in Chapter 6.

Civil Disobedience in Hong Kong Hauerwasian Discourse

Given the Hong Kong Hauerwasians' view of the separation of church and state, and their understandings of the church's publicness, one could imagine that they would be sympathetic to democratic movements, based on their free church tradition. In contrast, it is interesting to see their objection to Occupy Central, specifically, as well as to the overall Umbrella Movement, which was initiated by the democratic campaign Occupy Central for Love and Peace (OCLP).

In addition to their proposal in 2015 to abandon the Protestant sector's ten votes in the selection committee of the Chief Executive of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Hauerwasians also objected to Occupy Central. On 26 September 2014, two days before what is often considered the start of the Umbrella Movement, Huen, Lau, and Tang published an article in the *Christian Times*, entitled 'The Prolonged Disobedience of the Powerless Ones—Post–Occupy Central and Hong Kong Churches'. This article expressed their disagreement with Occupy Central, and especially with the strategy civil disobedience:

⁵⁵⁹ This concept will also be elaborated in Chapter 6 regarding the communality of Hauerwas's theology. Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, 97; Luke Bretherton, 'Politics in the Service of Society: A Response to My Interlocutors', *Studies in Christian Ethics* 33, 2 (2020): 262–270.

We do not agree with a collective movement highlighting civil disobedience, as a political tool to enforce a governmental change—the repentance of the human heart cannot be achieved by an intimidating method. Christians should not fight against the government because the latter cannot fulfil our wants and expectations, due to the more important fact that we will not be loyal to the government because it can fulfil our wants and expectations, based on the same principle.⁵⁶⁰

Their strong distrust of the government, similar to the determination of Occupy Central, was due to the ‘Decision 831’ (*831 jueding*), referring to the date, 31 August 2014, when the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress decided to use the 2012 election method for the Chief Executive of Hong Kong to select the next candidate in 2017.⁵⁶¹ This means that the 2017 election of the Chief Executive would not have universal suffrage, as mandated in the Hong Kong Basic Law Article 45.⁵⁶² As discussed in Chapter 4, the initiating organisations of the Umbrella Movement (that is, OCLP, the Hong Kong Federation of Students, and other democratic groups) demanded universal suffrage. For them, the absence of universal suffrage is a violation of the Basic Law. Therefore, civil disobedience was proposed by OCLP, a campaign established by three Protestants—Benny Tai, Associate Professor of Law at the University of Hong Kong; Chan Kin-man, Associate Professor of Sociology at the CUHK; and Chu Yiu-ming,

⁵⁶⁰ Note that in the original Chinese passage, when discussing the government, they used the third-person pronoun for an animal—this implies that they perceive the moral standard of the government lower than human beings. Thus, in a later passage, they observe that ‘their morality is all the same’, using the same third-person pronoun for an animal again. Moreover, although the title states that it was ‘post–Occupy Central’, the article was published two days before the official start of Occupy Central. For details, see Freeman Huen, Vincent Lau, and Andres Tang, ‘Wu quan zhe de chang qi kangming—hou zhan Zhong yu Xianggang jiaohui’ [The Prolonged Disobedience of the Powerless Ones—Post–Occupy Central and Hong Kong Churches], *Shidai luntan* [Christian Times], 26 September 2014, <https://bit.ly/33lcuYy>.

⁵⁶¹ ‘Hewei renda ba sanyi?’ [What Is 31 August of the National People’s Congress?], *Hong Kong Economic Times*, 20 August 2018, <https://bit.ly/32ILbMj>.

⁵⁶² ‘The Basic Law’, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China, updated April 2017, https://www.basiclaw.gov.hk/en/basiclawtext/chapter_4.html.

Senior Pastor at Chai Wan Baptist Church—urging universal suffrage.⁵⁶³ It intended to follow in the footsteps of Martin Luther King Jr., participating in civil disobedience to seek for the greater good in society, namely, through universal suffrage for the Chief Executive of Hong Kong.⁵⁶⁴

When discussing the state in the midst of the Movement, the Hong Kong Hauerwasians tended to refer to it as the Beijing regime (*Beijing zhengquan*), and not merely the SAR government. This is why they argued that the state continuously persecuted minorities, the relatives of the protesters in the Tiananmen Square protests, and right-defence activists,⁵⁶⁵ which has more to do with the Communist Party of China than the SAR government. This helps explain why the Hong Kong Hauerwasians preferred a more separatist approach to distance themselves from the powers ‘who used violence to limit sins in a fallen world’.⁵⁶⁶ They expressed that:

we respect the authority not out of fear, but because Jesus Christ lives without fear, who decided to be judged and unreasonably insulted by the earthly regime until death. Thus, we should also participate, and be part of his perseverance to the rebellious power and the final victory.⁵⁶⁷

Nonetheless, the main concern for Hong Kong Hauerwasians in opposing the Umbrella Movement is its unsustainability. Instead, a ‘prolonged protest’ (*Changqi kangzheng*) should follow Jesus’s lifestyle to testify the gospel. Thus, the church can form a new order for the world

⁵⁶³ Note that even in the Baptist Convention of Hong Kong, there is a wide spectrum of political views. It would be an oversimplification to assume that since Hong Kong Hauerwasians reject the involvement of the Umbrella Movement, all Baptist pastoral leaders hold the same view.

⁵⁶⁴ For details, see OCLP’s manifesto and Benny Tai’s article on public theology: ‘Manifesto’, Occupy Central with Love and Peace, last modified 2 January 2013, <http://oclp.hk/index.php?route=occupy/bookdetail&bookid=11>; Benny Tai, ‘Gonggong shenxue gongyi yu falu: Yixie chubu de xiangfa’ [Public Theology, Justice, and Law: Some Preliminary Thoughts], *Zhongguo shenxue yanjiuyuan qikan* [Journal of the Chinese Graduate School of Theology] 54 (January 2013): 73–94.

⁵⁶⁵ In short, right defence (*weiquan*) activists are lawyers and law scholars who fight for the right of those who have been oppressed by the government. For details, see Alexander Chow, *Chinese Public Theology: Generational Shifts and Confucian Imagination in Chinese Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 101–105.

⁵⁶⁶ Huen, Lau, and Tang, ‘Wu quan zhe de chang qi kangming’.

⁵⁶⁷ Huen, Lau, and Tang, ‘Wu quan zhe de chang qi kangming’.

through discipleship and the church community.⁵⁶⁸ It is notable that in this article, Hauerwas was never quoted—in fact, no theologians were cited. One might question whether this article is Hauerwasian at all, although it briefly discusses the testimony of the Christian community.⁵⁶⁹ Their opposition to Occupy Central and the Umbrella Movement seems to be based on their perspective on the corruptive status of the PRC state, rather than a critique of Occupy Central or the Umbrella Movement *per se*, and the dialogue does not employ Hauerwas’s theory.

In light of the Hauerwasian dialogue regarding Occupy Central in their 2014 article, one year earlier, when Huen solely authored the article “‘Occupy Central’ and Civil Disobedience: An Example of Identifying Christian Ethics’, his theological engagement was mainly with Yoder, in terms of the nonviolence discourse in Occupy Central. Although he declared that ‘in terms of my personal faith, I [could not] agree with the beliefs, means, goals, and values of Occupy Central’, his tone was milder here than in the co-authored article.⁵⁷⁰ At least, in this article published in August 2013, he considered the actions of the organisers as well as the participants ‘a genuine fulfilment of their faith’.⁵⁷¹ It seems to me that Huen’s theology is continuous developing, as Joshua Cho, President of the HKBTS, addressed in the foreword of *Writing with Hauerwas*. Even within the space of one year, his position seemed to shift.⁵⁷²

Nevertheless, Huen’s major disagreement with Occupy Central results from their different perceptions of nonviolence. For him,

⁵⁶⁸ Huen, Lau, and Tang, ‘Wu quan zhe de chang qi kangming’.

⁵⁶⁹ Huen, Lau, and Tang, ‘Wu quan zhe de chang qi kangming’.

⁵⁷⁰ Freeman Huen, ‘Zhan Zhong yu gongmin kangming: Jidutu lunli bianshi de yiqi shifan (Xia)’ [‘Occupy Central’ and Civil Disobedience: An Example of Identifying Christian Ethics], *Shidai luntan* [Christian Times], 21 August 2013, <https://bit.ly/36EVdeL>.

⁵⁷¹ Huen, ‘Zhan Zhong yu gongmin kangming’.

⁵⁷² Joshua Cho, ‘Foreward’, in Freeman Huen, *Shehui lunli: Du xie Houhuoshi* [Title in English on colophon: *Writing with Hauerwas: Essays on Social Ethic*] (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers, 2017), xiv.

the life attitude of nonviolence is to give up being one's own master as well as to controlling others. Moreover, one should discard the use of the world's violence to respond to the world. Nonviolence is firstly a devotion to ethics, and also a spiritual practice. Nonviolence should not be treated as an appealing aspect to attract the sympathy of the media or the public, after calculating the efficiency and the cost. Instead, regardless of the consequence, Christians should make an effort to live a nonviolent testimony, to affirm God's character revealing on Jesus himself. Hence, Christians can learn to love the world with God's approach, which is a profound perseverance.⁵⁷³

Although Huen endorsed Martin Luther King Jr.'s civil disobedience and considered it the true type of civil disobedience, he rejected the approach of appealing to the public based on a certain type of nonviolent action. For him, Hong Kong Christians have long regarded nonviolence as an impossible ideal and labelled Christian pacifists as sectarians. Thus, the pro–Occupy Central Christians should not take nonviolence for granted and treat it as their own.

Considering how Hauerwas's theology has been informed by Yoder's,⁵⁷⁴ it can be argued that Huen's discussion of being the daily testimony of Christ is Hauerwasian. Following Yoder's argument, he commented in his later co-authored article, “‘Occupy Central’ and Civil Disobedience’, that the church has not lived out the testimony of Jesus, and thus, that this kind of one-time experience in the Umbrella Movement, because of its unsustainability, cannot alter the Christian's lifestyle.⁵⁷⁵

⁵⁷³ Freeman Huen, “‘Zhan Zhong’ yu gongmin kangming: Jidutu lunli bianshi de yiqi shifan (Xia)’ [‘Occupy Central’ and Civil Disobedience: An Example of Identifying Christian Ethics], *Shidai luntan* [*Christian Times*], 21 August 2013, <https://bit.ly/36EVdeL>.

⁵⁷⁴ Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, xxiv–xxv.

⁵⁷⁵ Huen, ‘Zhan Zhong yu gongmin kangming’.

Conclusion

Through the analysis above, from the concept of the separation of church and state, to the understanding of publicness, to the discourse of civil disobedience, the approach of Hong Kong Hauerwasians seem to be slightly different from Hauerwas's own perspective, although they both have been criticised for being sectarian. Nonetheless, this chapter attempts to illustrate the sectarian tendency of Hong Kong Hauerwasians, even before using Hauerwas's methodology to develop a theological dialogue in relation to the sociopolitical situation in Hong Kong. Hence, the label of sectarianism seems to be an unfair judgment to Hauerwas himself. Nevertheless, since the theologies of Hong Kong Hauerwasians have been regarded as if they represented Hauerwas's own theology, the next chapter seeks to distinguish the two in order to show how Hauerwas's theology can be more usefully applied to the context of post-1997 Hong Kong.

CHAPTER 6

Hauerwas's Contribution to Hong Kong Public Theology

Nonviolence is not passivity. It is, as a matter of fact, the requirement to be as articulate as one can to find alternatives that will make it possible to work for justice in a world of deep violence.

—Stanley Hauerwas, 2018⁵⁷⁶

Labelling someone as a follower of a certain theologian is not difficult. However, to trace why the rise of Hong Kong Hauerwasians becomes a phenomenon requires more effort. As shown in Chapter 5, despite the usual perception by many Hong Kong Protestants that Freeman Huen, Vincent Lau, and Andres Tang—the Hong Kong Hauerwasians—have employed Hauerwas's social ethics to develop their theology with regards to the civil society and the political sectors, their theology is not as Hauerwasian as is typically claimed. Rather, I have argued that while their theology has similarities to that of Hauerwas, it is constructed not from Hauerwas's understanding, but through their own understanding of the world.

While it is evident that the Hong Kong Hauerwasians have made use of themes similar to Hauerwas's social ethics to construct their theology, this began much earlier than 2016, the year of the election of the selection committee for the Chief Executive of Hong Kong. In 2015, one of the Hong Kong Hauerwasians, Andres Tang, edited a volume called *Epistemology of Peace* (*Heping zhishi lun*) as a theological response to the Umbrella Movement. This work examined

⁵⁷⁶ Stanley Hauerwas, 'Christian Social Engagement and the Umbrella Movement', interview by Jonathan Wilson, *Regent College*, 27 June 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7rnSLNzHrd8&feature=youtu.be>.

how Hong Kong theologians could engage in a peaceful dialogue with people who had different opinions to their own.⁵⁷⁷ The following year saw the release of another book edited by Tang, who discussed how nonviolence was feasible in the post–Umbrella Movement era.⁵⁷⁸ Although these two volumes consist of works written by other Protestant theologians who do not necessarily employ Hauerwas’s theology, it is notable that Tang—along with fellow Hong Kong Hauerwasian Huen, who contributed chapters to both books—showed a tendency to highlight peaceableness and nonviolence, which are recurrent themes in Hauerwas’s theology, though Huen and Tang engaged other theologians in the two volumes. Furthermore, although participants in the anti-extradition law protests are not necessarily Christian nor Hauerwasian, it happened that a considerable number of protesters claimed their goal in the movement is to be ‘peaceful, rational, and nonviolent’ (*he li fei*), where peaceableness and nonviolence are the major themes for non-Christians as well.⁵⁷⁹ Thus, it is therefore the task of this chapter to address these two themes from a basis in Hauerwas’s theology to see how it can shed light on Hong Kong public theology.

The first advantage of using Hauerwas’s theology in the Hong Kong context is that, although he suggests that the church can be an alternative community that testifies to Jesus’s teaching, he never seeks to build a Christendom, and he rejects Constantinianism. This falls in line with Hong Kong evangelicals; many conversations in the post–Umbrella Movement era have focused on the church’s mere detachment from and lack of interest in politics, which is designed

⁵⁷⁷ Andres Tang (Ed.), *Heping zhishilun—cong lixing de baoli zouxiang duihua de keneng* [Epistemology of Peace—From Rational Violence to the Possibility of Dialogue] (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers, 2015).

⁵⁷⁸ Andres Tang (Ed.), *Fei baoli shi'er wen* [Twelve Questions on Nonviolence] (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers, 2017).

⁵⁷⁹ Scientific Papa, ‘Cong “He Li Fei” Dao “He Li Fei 2.0”’ [From “Peace, Rationality, Nonviolence” to “Peace, Rationality, Nonviolence 2.0”], *The New Lens*, 23 July 2019. <https://www.thenewslens.com/article/122541>.

to prevent Constantinianism.⁵⁸⁰ Hauerwas's theology can perhaps provide the third way for Hong Kong evangelicals because, while he proposes a model that divides the church and the world, his theology does not suggest a total separation from the world. In this way, it can be helpful to adapt his approach for Hong Kong and observe how it translates into this context, since Hong Kong society has never come near to being a Christendom, even under British colonial rule, and the Christian population has never dominated Hong Kong society.

The second advantage of employing Hauerwas's theology is his preference for nonviolence. Although many scholars may have challenged Hauerwas's approach to nonviolence because it is largely built on his opposition to American militarism, I will argue that in some ways, it is beneficial to develop his notion of nonviolence in Hong Kong public theology, despite the absence of a local army in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR). This chapter will explore the concept of violence (*bao*) in Chinese terms, which does not only mean physical force but also encompasses all forms of abusive force towards enemies or victims.⁵⁸¹ It contributes to Hong Kong's growing discourse on public theology because as Hauerwas has rightly articulated, being a peaceable community does not require passivity and silence before an oppressive power. In contrast to the false assumption common among Hong Kong Protestant churches; embracing the concept of nonviolence does not necessarily entail being subservient to another.

The third benefit of using Hauerwas's theology in Hong Kong is his emphasis on the community. The witnesses of the church as a group and their narrative to the world seem to fit

⁵⁸⁰ Freeman Huen, 'Zhengjiao fenli de zaisi' [Reflection on the Separation of Church and State], *Shidai luntan* [Christian Times], 3 July 2015, <https://bit.ly/2NeLfJn>.

⁵⁸¹ Although Huen sought to interpret Hauerwas's idea of nonviolence in the light of physical abusive force, his writings seem to encompass the use of non-physical force as well. For more details, see Freeman Huen, *Shehui lunli: Du xie Houhuoshi* [Title in English on colophon: *Writing with Hauerwas: Essays on Social Ethic*] (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers, 2017), 66–72.

well in Hong Kong society,⁵⁸² which is more communal than Hauerwas's own American context (which is far more individualistic). Towards the end of this chapter, I will explore this point of view and explain how the church as a community is crucial to the construction of a public theology in Hong Kong.

The Contextuality of Hauerwas's Theology in Hong Kong

Duncan B. Forrester, the former director of the Centre for Theology and Public Issues at the University of Edinburgh, has argued that '[public] theology is necessarily always contextual. It responds to situations, theories, and issues which change over time, while endeavouring to hold fast to a tradition which has a constant core.'⁵⁸³ Indeed, in response to the unique situation of Hong Kong, this section will take account of this background and explain how Hauerwas's theology is suitable for the development of a Hong Kong public theology, despite his focus on the American context. For Hauerwas, an ethic has to be contextualised. As asserted by Michael Ignatieff, a political historian and the president of the Central European University,⁵⁸⁴ it is impossible to put forward a global system of ethics that can be applied to every context.⁵⁸⁵ Although Hauerwas claims that he does not intend to construct a systematic Christian ethic, he has written extensively on theological matters in public life which can address many of the gaps in the existing theology considered in Chapters 2–4.

⁵⁸² According to Hofstede Insights, a company that studies the organisational structure and the cultural differences around the world, Hong Kong only scores 25 out of 100 in the category of individualism, which means Hong Kong citizens are highly collective in general. 'Hong Kong', Hofstede Insights, accessed 19 February 2020, <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country/hong-kong/>.

⁵⁸³ Duncan B. Forrester, 'The Scope of Public Theology', *Studies in Christian Ethics* 17, 2 (2004): 6. See the Introduction to this thesis.

⁵⁸⁴ 'Michael Ignatieff', Central European University, accessed 24 November 2019, https://people.ceu.edu/michael_ignatieff.

⁵⁸⁵ Michael Ignatieff, *The Ordinary Virtues: Moral Order in a Divided World* (Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 2017), 202–203.

Hauerwas addresses the importance of the construction of social ethics through one's narrative, which illustrates the highly contextual nature of his theology and his lack of interest in developing universal Christian ethics.⁵⁸⁶ For example, in his monograph *Christian Existence Today*, Hauerwas illustrates how his identity as a Texan illuminates his worldview and thus shapes his theology; his understanding of the story of his Texan ancestors helps him to construct his identity as a Texan. Likewise, the story of Jesus helps Christians know their past and hence guides them to be Christians who can live truthfully and faithfully with the guidance of the scripture. Having fully realised their true identity, Christians in the present day have a story that serves as Christ's testimony and can continue his legacy for future generations.⁵⁸⁷ This is, in other words, a lived theology for every disciple who commits to following Jesus and obeying his commandments.

Likewise, the aim of this project is to continue this kind of lived theology in the public sphere, in accordance with the context of Hong Kong. One of the main features of social movements in Hong Kong is their decentralisation—that is, such movements are not led by particular political parties or charismatic leaders but by participants who are willing to offer their talent.⁵⁸⁸ This being so, a more feasible way of developing a Hong Kong public theology is not to standardise a particular political view but rather to promote a theology that allows people to speak for themselves, based on their collective narrative in the movement. Indeed, following Hauerwas's argument, whether or not they have participated in a social movement, Hong Kong Christians should embrace Jesus's story as their own because this story serves as a continuous

⁵⁸⁶ Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, 19.

⁵⁸⁷ Stanley Hauerwas, *Christian Existence Today* (Durham, NC: Labyrinth, 1985), 30–42.

⁵⁸⁸ For the discussions of decentralisation in the anti-extradition law protests, see Francis L.F. Lee, 'Solidarity in the Anti-Extradition Bill Movement in Hong Kong', *Critical Asian Studies* 52, 1 (February 2020): 18–32.

proclamation of God the creator and redeemer in their lives.⁵⁸⁹ Despite the common misconception that Hauerwas's theology merely highlights a detachment from politics in order to showcase how the church differs from the wider society, his emphasis on the Christian narrative can be relevant to the Hong Kong context because this kind of narrative could lift the downcast atmosphere in Hong Kong, as well as function as the salt and the light of the world.

Indeed, the American Catholic missiologist Stephen Bevans (b. 1944) identifies Hauerwas's theology as countercultural in one of his six models of contextual theology. Bevans highlights that it is '*countercultural* rather than *anticultural*'.⁵⁹⁰ In other words, to be an authentic Christian community has to always concern its relevance to the corresponding culture and not to deem everything evil in the culture. As discussed in Chapter 5, there is always a danger that this type of model is seen as anticultural or sectarian, but it is noteworthy that being witnesses in one's context is different from a complete withdrawal, because the latter implies a passive response to social and political issues, while the former actively creates a testimony to the culture it disagrees with. For Hauerwas, his apparent otherworldly approach aims to distinguish the church and the world, while discussing how one is related to the other.⁵⁹¹

Bevans's examples of British missiologist Lesslie Newbigin (1909–1998) may shed light on the contextuality of Hauerwas's theology. In a conference of the 'Gospel and Our Culture Network' movement, which aimed to discuss the Christians witness in missionary work, Newbigin indicated that North American churches had been too comfortable to their context to an extent that they became unable to challenge their surrounding culture. For example, Newbigin

⁵⁸⁹ Hauerwas, *Christian Existence Today*, 40–41.

⁵⁹⁰ Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992), 125.

⁵⁹¹ In defence of his Christological approach, John Yoder has criticised H. Richard Niebuhr's 'Christ against culture' typology since it overlooks the incarnated nature of Christ, who is in the world, and hence not totally separated from the world. For details, see 'How H. Richard Niebuhr Reasoned: A Critique of *Christ and Culture*'. In *Authentic Transformation: A New Vision of Christ and Culture*, ed. Glen H. Stassen, Diane M. Yeager, and John Howard Yoder (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 59.

criticised the privatisation of Christian faith in North America and urged churches to provide an alternative vision to the world.⁵⁹² In this way, the challenge Newbigin and Hauerwas faced in North America is also similar to that of Hong Kong Christians, because Hong Kong Christians are discerning how they can still testify Jesus if churches avoid the discussions of social and political issues. Based on Bevans's countercultural model, one may ask how the interpretation of Jesus's story may affect the interpretation of present experiences, and thus the Christian community can challenge and provide an alternative witness to the world.⁵⁹³

In this way, Hauerwas's theology is helpful due to the correlation it draws between individuals and their context. For Joshua Cho, President of the Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary (HKBTS) and an MDiv graduate of Yale Divinity School, Hauerwas considers that individuals cannot be detached from their context and therefore from their traditions, which are embedded and inherited from others, and are inseparable from themselves. This again illustrates Hauerwas's opposition to political liberalism, which highlights individuals' ability to make their own judgment independent of their context.⁵⁹⁴ For Hauerwas and his Yale professors Hans Frei (1922–1988) and George Lindbeck (1923–2018), who are all postliberal scholars, narratives are developed from the traditions of individuals and their communities.⁵⁹⁵ This contrasts with the Kantian notion that an individual can be rational based on their own decisions, independent of the environment.⁵⁹⁶ An individual's story is part of the larger stories that make up a society,

⁵⁹² Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 127–132.

⁵⁹³ Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, 120–124.

⁵⁹⁴ Joshua Cho, *Renxing yu dexing—you chongxian zhenrenxing dao zhongxun dexing lunli* [*Human Nature and Virtue: From Revealing True Human Nature to Seeking the Ethics of Virtue*] (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary, 2004), 128–129; Stanley Hauerwas, Richard Bondi, and David B. Burrell, *Truthfulness and Tragedy: Further Investigations in Christian Ethics* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977), 45.

⁵⁹⁵ Cho, *Renxing yu dexing*, 130, 191–206.

⁵⁹⁶ Immanuel Kant, *Ethical Philosophy: Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. James W. Ellington (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1983); Cho, *Renxing yu dexing*, 133.

which is blended with the histories of family, of society, and of the nation.⁵⁹⁷ If this is applied to the Hong Kong context, one can recognise how the political atmosphere can influence individuals' public theology; no one is an island in the context of massive civil disobedience that has penetrated all aspects of life, whether or not one chooses to participate.⁵⁹⁸ Just as Christians in the early church period collectively (re)narrated and (re)interpreted the stories of Christ, Hong Kong Protestants may also continue the legacy of Jesus through their narratives in post-1997 Hong Kong, ensuring their narratives do not become memories, but rather contribute to the public theologies to be experienced by future generations.⁵⁹⁹

Hauerwas's Perspective on East Asian Christianity

Hauerwas's response to the stories of the Hong Kong protesters is perhaps different to what his accusers might have thought. One might assume that Hauerwas himself, similar to the approach of the Hong Kong Hauerwasians, would have disapproved of overt Christian' involvement in the Umbrella Movement. However, in an interview with Jonathan Wilson conducted at Regent College in 2018, Hauerwas comments:

I've always said I'm not asking Christians to withdraw from social engagement. I just want them to be there as Christians. And that means that you always have to remember that those that you're opposing are God's good creatures. And so you have to work in a way

⁵⁹⁷ Cho, *Renxing yu dexing*, 134.

⁵⁹⁸ To advance the effectiveness of civil obedience, participants in the anti-extradition law protests started to occupy shopping malls and major highways to increase awareness of the political issues in Hong Kong. See Mike Ives and Ezra Cheung, 'Protesters Start Three Days of Civil Disobedience in Hong Kong', *The New York Times*, 3 August 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/03/world/asia/hong-kong-protest.html>.

⁵⁹⁹ Cho, *Renxing yu dexing*, 138; Stanley Hauerwas, *A Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 67.

that helps them reframe their position in a way that offers an imaginative alternative to what they regard as the necessity of violence.⁶⁰⁰

Although the interview only lasts three minutes, it echoes the speech Hauerwas gave that same year at the Fifth Annual Christian Forum for Reconciliation in Northeast Asia, cementing his position that being Christ's witness does not mean having to disengage from the public sphere. The analysis in this section will focus on this presentation, which has now been published in *Jian Dao*, a theological journal of the Alliance Bible Seminary. The article can be interpreted as how he refines his theology outside the American context.

The reason for the popularity of his theology in Asia, Hauerwas presumes, is that different to the American context, Christianity in Asia is not tied to a particular political cause. Christian witness in Asia is not bound to any social, political, or economic system.⁶⁰¹ According to Hauerwas's logic, being for or against a democratic movement does not necessarily violate the concept of Christian witness, as his approach to Christian ethics does not entail a prior political stance.

Another factor that prohibits many Americans from supporting Hauerwas's notions of social ethics is the individualism embedded in Western culture. Many American Christians find it difficult to embrace his ecclesiocentric soteriology because of the influence of evangelicalism's emphasis on personal salvation.⁶⁰² Indeed, although Hong Kong society was until fairly recently governed by the British, whose society highlights individuality, communitarianism functions as the main norm of Asian society, including Hong Kong. As stated by Lee Kuan Yew, the founding Prime Minister of Singapore, for Asians, there is 'little doubt

⁶⁰⁰ Hauerwas, 'Christian Social Engagement and the Umbrella Movement'.

⁶⁰¹ Stanley Hauerwas, 'Zai Yazhou de jiaohui—yizhong Bate shi de mo xiang' [The Church in Asia: A Barthian Meditation], tran. Chiu Man-kuan, *Jian Dao* 51 (2019): 148.

⁶⁰² Hauerwas, 'Zai Yazhou de jiaohui', 148.

that a society with communitarian values where the interests of society take precedence over that of the individual suits them better than the individualism of America.’⁶⁰³ Furthermore, Alexander Chow in his monograph *Chinese Public Theology* suggests that, in Chinese society, individual moral behaviours also matter to one’s collective bodies, such as school, work, and church.⁶⁰⁴ Following this logic, the communal nature of Hong Kong society explains why being a witness as a whole church is deemed to be the most appropriate option. Similar to Kwok Wai-luen’s notion of ‘the whole church’ put forward under the auspices of the Lausanne Movement (see Chapter 4),⁶⁰⁵ testimony is not only an individual matter but rather concerns the whole church. The notion of communal witness can be further demonstrated through a Christian testimony against unjust social issues or a totalitarian regime.

In addition to his interpretation of why his theology is less popular in the United States, Hauerwas further discusses the witness of two renowned Chinese theologians in the mid-twentieth century—Wang Mingdao (1900–1991) and K. H. Ting (1915–2012)—in light of his reading of *Chinese Theology: Text and Context*, written by Chloë Starr, Associate Professor of Asian Christianity and Theology at Yale Divinity School.⁶⁰⁶ In her book, Starr emphasises Ting’s approach of cooperating with the state while elaborating a theology for the Chinese people. Since many of the conversations in the previous chapters of this thesis consider how to handle the relationship between church and state, this case study can serve as an additional

⁶⁰³ Lee Kuan-yew, *International Herald Tribune*, 9–10 November 1991; for a discussion regarding the tension between communitarianism and individualism in Asian society, see Joanne, R. Bauer and Daniel A. Bell, ‘Introduction’, in *The East Asian Challenge for Human Rights*, ed. Joanne, R. Bauer and Daniel A. Bell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 3–26.

⁶⁰⁴ Alexander Chow, *Chinese Public Theology: Generational Shifts and Confucian Imagination in Chinese Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 147–150.

⁶⁰⁵ Kwok Wai-luen, *Shijia yu hongqi: Dangdai Zhongguo zhengjiao guanxi lunji* [*The Cross and the Red Flag: on Contemporary Church-State Relations in China*] (Hong Kong: VW Link, 2018), 149; ‘The Whole Church Taking the Whole Gospel to the Whole World’, Theology Working Group of the Lausanne Movement, 2 June 2019, <https://www.lausanne.org/content/twg-three-wholes>.

⁶⁰⁶ Chloë Starr, *Chinese Theology: Text and Context* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 185–212.

example of how Starr and Hauerwas perceive these kinds of dynamics in the Chinese context. As Starr writes,

For someone who sought to serve both church and state, [Ting] may have preferred a greater unity of symbolic identity. As a member of the National People's Congress and vice chair of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference for two decades, [Ting] had earned his national standing. Yet it was this association with the state—and the impression among some Christians that [Ting] was too close to the government, or worse, that his theology was an act of appeasement—that formed a source of contention throughout his decades of leadership.⁶⁰⁷

Wang's position serves as a counter-argument to Ting's perspective in how the former disapproved of the latter for '[using] the principle of obedience to man's rules and submission to man's authority to cover up their cowardice and failure'.⁶⁰⁸ In Starr's interpretation, Wang perceives 'holiness [to mean] separation from the world and a steadfast persistence in doing what one believe[s] to be right'.⁶⁰⁹ It is Wang's different understanding of the role of the church—that Christ, instead of the state should have authority over all—that led him not to sign the Christian Manifesto,⁶¹⁰ as well as to disengage from the Three-Self Movement.⁶¹¹

In light of the different standpoints of Ting and Wang, Starr employs Karl Barth's notion of 'honest ignorance' to confess her limited understanding of the debates in 1950s China:

⁶⁰⁷ Starr, *Chinese Theology*, 186.

⁶⁰⁸ Starr, *Chinese Theology*, 185; Wang Mingdao, 'Obey God or Men?', in *A Call to the Church*, trans. Theodore Choy (Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1983), 28.

⁶⁰⁹ Starr, *Chinese Theology*, 201.

⁶¹⁰ The Christian Manifesto was a statement of the church's political standpoints where certain 'basic tasks' had to be done by the Christian churches to support the newly established PRC in 1949. Philip L. Wickeri, *Seeking the Common Ground: Protestant Christianity, the Three-Self Movement, and China's United Front* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988), 127–133.

⁶¹¹ Starr, *Chinese Theology*, 202.

Barth's warning that it is impossible for an outsider to make those distinctions seems sound, but our only conclusion here might be that it is not our task to reconcile these positions.... How such a stance might help the ongoing process of reconciliation in the Chinese church between the house-church proponents of Wang and the TSPM [Three-Self Patriotic Movement] inheritors of [Ting's] legacy is a separate question, but through Barth we can affirm both the power of demonstrating the difference of kingdom values through twenty years in prison *and* the value of working together with the state to keep Christ present in the civil and church communities.⁶¹²

Following Starr's argument, Hauerwas has not denied the importance of Ting and Wang, in spite of their different theological approach; on the contrary, Hauerwas has stated that it is their characters as well as their divergent opinions regarding the relationship between the church and the world that have led them to embrace certain worldviews.⁶¹³ For Hauerwas, the significance of this analysis is not the need to choose a side; rather, the focus should be on why they hold such views and how these views have formed their theologies that testify to God in the world.

For Hauerwas, many from an evangelical background, whether Chinese or American, are tempted to follow Wang because they have been taught to support free churches; however, Hauerwas asserts that Wang's criticism of the church's inner issues reveals that he is a contentious person, and even 'difficult to work with' due to his total opposition to the government's control of churches.⁶¹⁴ On the other hand, Hauerwas categorises Ting as 'reformed but with a Kuyperian direction'.⁶¹⁵ Here, Hauerwas does not appear to be claiming that Ting's approach and his relationship with the state are influenced by the theology of Abraham Kuyper

⁶¹² Starr, *Chinese Theology*, 209–210.

⁶¹³ Hauerwas, 'Zai Yazhou de jiaohui', 158.

⁶¹⁴ Hauerwas, 'Zai Yazhou de jiaohui', 157–158.

⁶¹⁵ Hauerwas, 'Zai Yazhou de jiaohui', 157.

(1837–1920),⁶¹⁶ given that Ting’s formation and training are Anglican, and that he was antagonistic to Calvinism and evangelical Christianity. Instead, Hauerwas is rather arguing that for Ting, the church does not have to oppose its nation and its people as it seeks to glorify God.⁶¹⁷ Hauerwas thinks that Ting’s understanding of the relationship between the church and the world shows the reason why he became the leader of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement, as Ting considered it possible to follow God’s way at the same time as cooperating with the state.⁶¹⁸

It should be noted that Hauerwas does not simply focus on how the Chinese government in the 1950s was ungodly; he rather argues from the motives of these two theologians to illustrate how both bore Christian witness to their contemporaries. According to Hauerwas, Ting considered the Chinese church to have been manipulated by the imperialistic, corrupt Western church since the eighteenth century, which caused the Chinese church to lose faith, hope, and love. In this way, the emergence of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement (TSPM) was necessary to heal the wounds that Western missionaries had brought to Chinese churches. From Ting’s standpoint, the people of the church cannot be separated from the people of the world because theology is not merely a subject for those who claim to be Christian; rather, the church always overlaps with the world. Hence, Ting asserts that from the perspective of Christianity, opposition to the liberation movements of the people is ethically wrong because Christianity itself should serve the people.⁶¹⁹ By contrast, Wang perceived Ting’s support to the TSPM as a betrayal of the church because, for Wang, the TSPM implied the manipulation of the government to the church.⁶²⁰ Hauerwas puts forward the argument that it is unnecessary to judge whether a church

⁶¹⁶ On Kuyper’s theology, see Abraham Kuyper, *Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1998).

⁶¹⁷ Starr, *Chinese Theology*, 185.

⁶¹⁸ Hauerwas, ‘Zai Yazhou de jiaohui’, 157.

⁶¹⁹ Hauerwas, ‘Zai Yazhou de jiaohui’, 159.

⁶²⁰ Hauerwas, ‘Zai Yazhou de jiaohui’, 159.

that works alongside the government is ungodly; a Christian witness to the world should be based on its motives, on top of its actions. Hauerwas also observes that Wang and Ting in essence have the same motive, since they both emphasised devotion to evangelism and doctrinal authority, although they expressed their motives through different actions because of their different characters.⁶²¹ Hauerwas concludes his article by stating that while Starr is too positive about Ting, he does not deny that Ting is seeking to testify to God by establishing a working relationship with the government. As a result, according to Hauerwas, it is unfair to reject Ting's witness on the grounds that he deems it necessary to work together with an unjust government.⁶²²

Hong Kong Protestants tend to believe that constructing a public theology entails a need to choose sides—either a total separation from the state like Wang, or a partnership model, like Ting. However, if one applies Hauerwas's interpretation of Wang and Ting on the Hong Kong context, this is not necessary; a theology that fully engages with the public sphere can vary, depending on one's context and thus one's worldview. Hauerwas has clarified that Christians do not have to withdraw from social engagement:⁶²³ his emphasis on Christians' collective testimony does not simply mean a withdrawal from protest, as mentioned earlier in this section, but can also incorporate involvement in a movement, according to one's Christian convictions. In other words, Hauerwas's theology does not simply result in a mere disengagement from politics or society.

Moreover, it is noteworthy that for Hauerwas, the church and the world are relational concepts, probably situated in the middle of the spectrum between Ting's and Wang's respective approaches. God has redeemed the world in the sense that God has never abandoned the world,

⁶²¹ Hauerwas, 'Zai Yazhou de jiaohui', 158.

⁶²² Hauerwas, 'Zai Yazhou de jiaohui', 158–161.

⁶²³ Hauerwas, 'Christian Social Engagement and the Umbrella Movement'.

even though the world may not accept its position as having been redeemed by the Lord. This brings us to Hauerwas's famous quote that 'the church serves the world by giving the world the means to see it truthfully'.⁶²⁴ In other words, the church does not follow 'a withdrawal ethic', nor does it constitute 'a self-righteous attempt to flee from the world's problems'.⁶²⁵ Applying Hauerwas's social ethics truthfully means that the Christian community should not withdraw from politics simply in order to demonstrate that it is above worldly matters, but should instead illustrate the insufficiency of all sorts of politics, through the testimony of the church. The church may look like a polity, but it is different in the sense that it supports and has no fear of the truth.⁶²⁶

If we construct a public theology through Hauerwas's understanding of Wang and Ting, it is important to establish that prior engagement with a certain type of political ideology is unnecessary. Hauerwas makes it clear that in his own context of the United States, being a Christian does not necessarily entail that one be a Republican. To extend his logic to the Hong Kong context, as shown in Chapters 2–4, if one attempts to defend any one group of the public theologians, one may miss the essence of Hauerwas's concept of Christian witness: it is a false assumption that one needs to choose only one political stance or one of the publics and claim that it is the only way to testify to God.

With regard to Hauerwas's opinion of non-democratic governments, he reiterates that the government is merely a human product and suggests that one should not expect a government to follow Christian principles.⁶²⁷ Hauerwas develops Barth's idea of 'honest ignorance', as

⁶²⁴ Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, 101–102.

⁶²⁵ Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, 102.

⁶²⁶ Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, 102.

⁶²⁷ Hauerwas, 'Zai Yazhou de jiaohui', 160.

proposed by Starr,⁶²⁸ interpreting it as an act of humble acceptance of ignorance of the Communist context in Eastern Europe, since the ignorant person has not experienced the new political power in Eastern Europe and thus cannot fully comprehend the situation.⁶²⁹ Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that this ignorance does not prevent one from criticising the attitudes, etiquette, methods, or policies of the Eastern European political authorities, or those of the Western European authorities towards Eastern Europe. Barth perceives all political powers as enemies that Christians should constantly resist. In his view, there is no such thing as a perfect political polity; there are only better or worse systems. The only criterion with which to judge if a polity is good or bad is whether a church can freely be a church; therefore, Barth criticised the Nazi regime because it forbade Christians from evangelising to the Jews.⁶³⁰

The fact that Hauerwas highlights Barth's concept of honest ignorance illustrates two issues. Firstly, Hauerwas does not propose a Christendom based on his understanding of government as a human product, though he has frequently been criticised on this ground, and secondly, although Hauerwas outlines his social ethics from an American perspective, he does not seek to impose it on other contexts—on the contrary, he accepts that one may not fully comprehend the situation of another context. The first aspect is particularly important for the construction of a Hong Kong public theology because Christians have never made up the majority of Hong Kong society and Hong Kong has never been a Christendom, nor will it be one in the foreseeable future. Hauerwas's understanding of the notion of a less-than-perfect government assists public theologians in positioning themselves in society and comprehending their relationship with the state.

⁶²⁸ Starr, *Chinese Theology*, 207–208.

⁶²⁹ Karl Barth, *Against the Stream: Shorter Post-War Writings, 1946–1952*, ed. Ronald Gregor Smith, trans. E.M. Delacour and Stanley Godman (London: SCM Press, 1954), 81.

⁶³⁰ Hauerwas, 'Zai Yazhou de jiaohui', 160–161.

Another significant aspect of this article is Hauerwas's opinions on the Umbrella Movement. To this end, he engages an article by Gillian Chu, a current PhD student at the Centre for the Study of Religion and Politics at the University of St Andrews. When an MDiv student at Regent College, Chu wrote an article on civil disobedience, in light of the intensified debates surrounding its use in Hong Kong Protestant circles. Disobedience seems to run contrary to the normal practice in Hong Kong churches, which is to obey authority, but Chu asserts that the church community should 'reflect upon whether these acts of civil disobedience take part in Christ's narrative, working to further the advent of the kingdom of God on earth'.⁶³¹ She believes that Hauerwas considers the means to be just as important as the ends, and therefore the question as to whether the church should participate in civil disobedience depends on whether such civil disobedience can, through Christian witness in Hong Kong society, bring witness to the world.⁶³² Furthermore, Chu argues that the main task of the church is not to monitor 'whether the government, against which the act of disobedience is aimed, functions democratically or otherwise'; it should instead be a continuous witness for the kingdom of God.⁶³³

In his article, Hauerwas critiques the false assumption that he would oppose participation in the Umbrella Movement. Instead, affirming Chu's interpretation of his Christian ethics, Hauerwas employs Barth's notion of honest ignorance because his context is different—he lives in the United States, where democracy is embedded in society. Hauerwas claimed in his June 2018 interview at Regent College that it would be arrogant to put forward an opinion on the

⁶³¹ Gillian Chu, 'Analysis of Stanley Hauerwas' Theology in Post-Umbrella Movement Hong Kong', *Journal of the Regent College Student Association: Academic Symposium 2018* (2 March 2018): 21.

⁶³² Chu, 'Analysis of Stanley Hauerwas' Theology in Post-Umbrella Movement', 21.

⁶³³ Chu, 'Analysis of Stanley Hauerwas' Theology in Post-Umbrella Movement', 21.

matter because Hong Kong Christians were threatened by violence that North Americans had never experienced.⁶³⁴

For Hauerwas, it is important for Christians to develop virtues so that they can face the world and live an abundant life.⁶³⁵ In some ways, this echoes his 1981 writings on Christian virtue: 'The moral life is not simply a matter of decision governed by publicly defensible principles and rules; we can only act in the world we see, a seeing partially determined by the kind of beings we have become through the stories we have learned and embodied in the life plan.'⁶³⁶ For Hauerwas, moral character and stories should be coherent, and through the latter, the former can be testified to the non-Christians around each witness.⁶³⁷ This approach seems to complement Kwok Wai-luen's statements on Mission Citizens (see Chapter 4), which emphasise developing spirituality and being a virtuous individual, given that motives are as important as actions and one's Christian beliefs can be connected to one's testimony in the world:⁶³⁸ 'We believe that, in a lost society, we should adjust our spirituality and reflect on our own context, so that we can discern God's advice to ourselves as well as to the society.'⁶³⁹ Hauerwas's approach to Christian ethics also requires Christ's followers to meditate on Jesus's story and regularly ponder whether their witness reflects the character of Jesus.

Based on this requirement, for many Hong Kong Christians, the standard of Hauerwas's Christian ethics is high: it requires a constant reflection on and discernment with Jesus, as one contemplates whether one's means and motives fully embody the testimony of Christ. This is different from their perception of Confucian ethics, which are considered a set of universal rules

⁶³⁴ Hauerwas, 'Christian Social Engagement and the Umbrella Movement'.

⁶³⁵ Hauerwas, 'Zai Yazhou de jiaohui', 162–165.

⁶³⁶ Stanley Hauerwas, *Vision and Virtue: Essays in Christian Ethical Reflection* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981), 69.

⁶³⁷ Hauerwas, *Vision and Virtue*, 74–76.

⁶³⁸ Hauerwas, *Vision and Virtue*, 77–80.

⁶³⁹ Kwok, *Shijia yu hongqi*, 182.

for everyday life that may turn to legalism.⁶⁴⁰ Therefore, deontological ethics may not be suitable for the context of the post–Umbrella Movement era. In light of this understanding, in the next section, I will demonstrate how two key themes in Hauerwas’s theology—nonviolence and peaceableness—can be brought into the conversation on public theology in Hong Kong.

A Peaceable Witness of Christ through Nonviolent Acts in the World

As violence becomes a norm in Hong Kong society, whether through language or physical force, many Hong Kong citizens—and especially Christians—are struggling with the tumultuous social atmosphere, and wondering how they can remain witnesses for Christ in this chaotic world. When Occupy Central with Love and Peace (OCLP) first published its ideas in the *Hong Kong Economic Journal* in 2013,⁶⁴¹ its co-founder Benny Tai could scarcely have imagined that the two main ideas illuminated in his writings—nonviolence and peaceableness—would become the central topics debated among Hong Kong theologians, and be connected to Hauerwas’s theology.⁶⁴² Although six years have passed since the emergence of the Umbrella Movement, these two themes recur in the writings of Hong Kong theologians and have perhaps evolved since 2019 based on the recent protests. This section will reflect on the communal witness of

⁶⁴⁰ For example, Geng Yunzhi (b. 1938), a former researcher at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, argued that the predominant use of leftist legalism during the Cultural Revolution has led to the interpretation of Confucianism as a set of universal rules. For details, see Geng Yunzhi, *Liao cao xuji: Geng Yunzhi xueshu suibi* [A Sequel of Polygonum’s Leaves: Geng Yunzhi Academic Essays] (Taipei: Showwe Publisher, 2008), 2.

⁶⁴¹ Notably, despite highlighting two other topics—love and justice—Tai did not mention King’s development of these two themes based on the theology of Paul Tillich. Instead, he argued through Nicholas Wolterstorff’s work. For details, see Preston N. Williams, ‘An Analysis of the Conception of Love and Its Influence on Justice in the Thought of Martin Luther King, Jr.’, *Journal of Religious Ethics* 18, 2 (Fall 1990): 15–31; Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Justice in Love* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2011), 84; Benny Tai, ‘Gongmin kangming de zuida shashangli wuqi’ [The Most Destructive Weapon of Civil Disobedience], *Hong Kong Economic Journal*, 16 January 2013, http://oclp.hk/index.php?route=occupy/article_detail&article_id=23.

⁶⁴² See the volume edited by Andres Tang: Andres Tang (Ed.), *Fei baoli shi’er wen* [Twelve Questions on Nonviolence] (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers, 2017); Tang, *Heping zhishi lun*.

Protestants from the perspectives of nonviolence and the peaceable path of Christian testimony in post-1997 Hong Kong.

Nonviolence

Less than one year after the start of the Umbrella Movement, Andres Tang published an edited volume called *Epistemology of Peace*. Although the title expresses Tang's interest in the topic of peaceableness, Tang attempts to use peace as a topic to engage in dialogue with what he calls 'the epistemology of rational violence' in Hong Kong society.⁶⁴³ In this volume, several evangelical theologians in Hong Kong examine the discourse of nonviolence, emerging from the rise in dialogue sparked by OCLP; to that end, this section will evaluate Hauerwas's notions of nonviolence in the Hong Kong context, distinguishing between two types of violent forces: (1) physical violence and (2) linguistic violence.

Nonviolence in the Hong Kong Protests

In *War and the American Difference*, Hauerwas applauds Martin Luther King Jr. for promoting nonviolence.⁶⁴⁴ In Hauerwas's interpretation, King perceived nonviolence as a way of life and not simply as a tactic. Therefore, the use of nonviolence is not only necessary in a social movement, but should be a belief spread through education to the wider community to make this way of life sustainable.⁶⁴⁵ Hauerwas also affirms King's suggestion that organisations have the potential to be powerfully nonviolent weapons whereby people in positions of power, whether in

⁶⁴³ Andres Tang, 'Daixu: Qianbei de duihua, heping de zhuxun' [Introduction: A Humble Dialogue, a Quest for Peace], in *Fei baoli shi'er wen* [Twelve Questions on Nonviolence], ed. Andres Tang (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers, 2017), 12.

⁶⁴⁴ Stanley Hauerwas, *War and the American Difference: Theological Reflections on Violence and National Identity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2011), 83–95.

⁶⁴⁵ Hauerwas, *War and the American Difference*, 92.

political parties or voters' leagues, work together so that the results of social or political changes can be more meaningful and long-lasting.⁶⁴⁶

Given the flow of his argument, it would be difficult to conclude that Hauerwas would deny the Protestant involvement in the Umbrella Movement, considering that Tai, one of the major leaders of the movement, employs King's concept to mobilise both Christians and non-Christians to fight for democracy in Hong Kong.⁶⁴⁷ Although civil disobedience is illegal in Hong Kong, Tai justifies its use because its nonviolent nature may encourage the wider public to participate. Tai clarifies that the ideal situation in a protest is for no (physical) violence to be used because doing so would lower its effectiveness, especially if the people oppose a violent path.⁶⁴⁸ According to Tai, since Occupy Central is one of the biggest weapons that can be deployed in the struggle for universal suffrage, it should not be wielded until the last critical moment. Although the Movement has occupied the main financial areas of Hong Kong for over three months, it was not Tai's intention or expectation that it would last so long, nor that it would become a model for the 2019 anti-extradition law protests.⁶⁴⁹

In light of Hauerwas's support for the nonviolent actions that characterised King's leadership of the civil rights movement in the United States, it is noteworthy that Hong Kong Hauerwasians maintain a different understanding of Hauerwas. Vincent Lau—a Christian ethicist

⁶⁴⁶ Martin Luther King Jr., *Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King Jr.*, ed. James M. Washington (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1986), 60–61; Hauerwas, *War and the American Difference*, 93.

⁶⁴⁷ Benny Tai, 'Gonggong shenxue, gongyi yu falu: Yixie chubu de xiangfa', 73–94.

⁶⁴⁸ Tai, 'Gongmin kangming de zuida shashangli wuqi'. On the opposition to violence in the anti-extradition law protests, see Verna Yu, 'Support for Hong Kong's Rebels Wavers after Most Violent Week Yet', *The Guardian*, 17 November 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/nov/17/hong-kong-support-rebels-wavers-most-violent-week>.

⁶⁴⁹ In the anti-extradition law protests, the protesters even used the slogan 'No Injury, No Bloodshed, No Arrest' (*bu shoushang, bu liuxie, bu beibu*) to highlight their intention to avoid nonviolence, even though they engaged in some violent actions such as destroying the windows of the legislative council or street lights that could have exposed the faces of the protesters. For details of the nonviolent beliefs declared by the protesters, see Zhang Jieping, '49 Tian, Xianggang fan song Zhong yundong ruhe laidao linjiedian?' [49 Days, How Hong Kong's Protests of Anti-Extradition Law Has Reached a Critical Point?], *Matters*, 27 July 2019, <https://bit.ly/2pVgi4b>.

at the HKBTS, a Hong Kong Hauerwasian, and a specialist on the work of John H. Yoder (1927–1997)⁶⁵⁰—comments that even a nonviolent revolution can be considered violent because it breaks down the social structure in such a way that the destruction cannot be mended. In spite of this, Lau elaborates on Yoder’s affirmation of the civil rights movement organised by African Americans, which in many ways did break down the unequal social structure in place in the twentieth-century United States. Yet this contradicts Yoder’s argument because, while Lau opposes pastors’ involvement in revolutions, as well as their working alongside with the government, he admires the civil rights movement’s leadership provided by pastoral leader Martin Luther King Jr.⁶⁵¹ Perhaps the Hong Kong government has not reached the point where Lau is forced to pick sides; however, evangelical theologians may have to discern and examine the unjust practices of a government because, in the foreseeable future, the social structures the government establishes may have to be amended or reconstructed.

Although there are limits to Lau’s statement that breaking a social structure can constitute violence, it is also unnecessary to seek for liberation from a government in every instance, as it may cause constant instability. According to Luke Bretherton, Professor of Christian Ethics at Duke Divinity School,⁶⁵² informal politics such as ‘social movements, community organizing, and the relational practices of everyday politics that take place in schools, firms, churches’⁶⁵³ help to ‘prevent the fragilization of society by generating and sustaining practices that enable communication and relationship across divides and without which the rule of law ... is a charade

⁶⁵⁰ Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary, ‘Vincent Lau’.

⁶⁵¹ Vincent Lau, ‘Chutan Youda de Yelimi moshi—sikao qi lunli xue de yiyi ji qi “gonggong” xingzhi’ [A Preliminary Study of the Jeremianic Model of John Howard Yoder—Examining Its Ethical Meanings and ‘Public’ Nature of His Theology], *Shandao qikan* [Hill Road] 31 (2013): 163.

⁶⁵² ‘Luke Bretherton’, Duke Divinity School, accessed 8 January 2020, <https://divinity.duke.edu/faculty/luke-bretherton>.

⁶⁵³ Luke Bretherton, ‘Politics in the Service of Society: A Response to My Interlocutors’, *Studies in Christian Ethics* 33, 2 (2020): 262–270.

(as in contemporary Mainland China)'.⁶⁵⁴ For Bretherton, the 2019 protests in Hong Kong were a way of demonstrating how modes of informal politics help sustain elements of formal politics, such as parliaments, electoral systems, and bureaucracy exemplified in the law.⁶⁵⁵ While on some occasions it can be necessary to break an unjust social system, a certain kind of hierarchal structure is still essential to maintain government functions.

The major contribution of Hauerwas's theory of nonviolence in terms of physical force is that it offers Hong Kong Protestants—and especially those involved in the protests—an imaginative alternative to the notion that violence is the only way to combat the oppressors in an already deeply violent world.⁶⁵⁶ As observed by Siu Cheng-ping, a former lecturer in biblical studies at the Bible Seminary of Hong Kong,⁶⁵⁷ Hauerwas takes Jesus as an exemplar to suggest an alternative to the strategies of the Israelites in the early church period, who thought that violence was the only way to combat the Roman Empire. This alternative also contrasts with the approach of the Pharisees, who thought that the law was the most appropriate avenue to pursue justice.⁶⁵⁸ Nonviolence is still the optimal path for Hong Kong's social movements, which have been organised by Christian and non-Christian protesters. According to Hauerwas, King considered nonviolence to be a central part of his own life due to his conviction that God would ultimately reward him at the end of his life for his work advocating the principle of nonviolence and to this end, he was tenacious in fulfilling his life goals in Christ.⁶⁵⁹

⁶⁵⁴ Bretherton, 'Politics in the Service of Society', 265.

⁶⁵⁵ Bretherton, 'Politics in the Service of Society', 263.

⁶⁵⁶ Hauerwas, 'Christian Social Engagement and the Umbrella Movement'.

⁶⁵⁷ Chiu Sung-ming, *Dang jiaohui yu shang zhengzhi: Zhengzhi shijian de shenxue fansi* [When Church Meets Politics: Theological Reflection on Political Praxis] (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers, 2005).

⁶⁵⁸ Siu Cheng-ping, 'Jidutu bixuguo fei baoli de shenghuo? Houhuoshi de guandian', in *Fei baoli shi'er wen* [Twelve Questions on Nonviolence], ed. Andres Tang (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers, 2017), 259.

⁶⁵⁹ Martin Luther King Jr., *The Autobiography of Martin Luther King Jr.*, ed. Clayborne Carson (New York: Warner, 1998), 358–359; Hauerwas, *War and the American Difference*, 95.

A limitation of Hauerwas's notion of nonviolence is perhaps under what circumstances can a considerable amount of violence be used in a protest. It is undoubtedly that Hauerwas's context, the United States, has no tolerance on police brutality, especially as shown in the nationwide protests regarding killing the unarmed African American George Floyd in May 2020.⁶⁶⁰ If the Hong Kong police employed excessive physical violence without a concrete reason, as reported by the human rights organisation Amnesty,⁶⁶¹ should the peaceful protesters, who were not resisting, at least defend themselves to avoid injury?⁶⁶² This is probably my slight disagreement with Hauerwas—when nonviolence may lead to permanent injury or death, we may have to reconsider in how extensive the principle of nonviolence to be used in the protests that can bring a Christian witness to society.

Nonviolence in the Chinese Language

On top of the violence that may be produced by physical force in protests, another issue that deeply troubles Hong Kong evangelicals is that of violence generated by non-physical force, such as the language used to construct theological discourses in the public sphere. Although Hauerwas mostly considers violence to refer to physically abrasive force, in the Chinese language, the word 'violence' (*bao*) can also encompass 'bullying' or 'humiliation'. This interpretation illustrates why it is common for Chinese speakers to understand *bao* in non-

⁶⁶⁰ Lauren Aratani, 'George Floyd Killing: What Sparked the Protests—and What Has Been the Response?', *The Guardian*, 29 May 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2020/may/29/george-floyd-killing-protests-police-brutality>.

⁶⁶¹ Amnesty International, 'Hong Kong: Lack of Accountability for Police Violence Could Fuel Unrest', 5 March 2020, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2020/03/hong-kong-lack-accountability-police-violence-fuel-unrest/>.

⁶⁶² As indicated by Kung Lap-yan, opponents of the anti-extradition law protests usually focus on the violence in the protests, but they have not distinguished the physical violence created by the police instead of the protesters. Kung Lap-yan, 'The Role of Religions in Extradition Law Amendment Bill Protest', *Sze* 275 (March 2020): 6.

physical forces. For example, in Xunzi's work on detestable elements of human nature, the word *bao* is used to describe how the oppressors gathered together to bully individuals: 'In a situation [in which we do away with the authority of lords and superiors, do without the transforming influence of ritual and morality, and discard the order provided by the laws and rectitude, without the restraints of penal laws and punishments,] the strong would inflict harm [or violence] on the weak and rob them; the many would tyrannize the few and wrest their possessions from them; and the perversity and rebelliousness of the whole world would quickly ensure their mutual destruction'.⁶⁶³ Another usage of *bao* can be found in *The Records of the Grand Historian*, a monumental history of China written in the first century BCE, where *bao* is employed to describe the story of Po Yi and Shu Ch'i, two characters from a royal family who seek revenge for their father who has been murdered by their enemies through abusive force: 'We climb this western hill and pick its ferns; replacing violence with violence (*yi bao yi bao*), [otherwise, King Wu of Zhou] will not see his own fault'.⁶⁶⁴

Based on this interpretation of *bao*, churches have a tendency to avoid both linguistic violence and non-physical force. In his edited volume *Twelve Questions on Nonviolence* (*Fei baoli shi'er wen*), Andres Tang questions how Christians should apply the principles of nonviolence.⁶⁶⁵ As Hong Kong society is highly influenced by Confucianism,⁶⁶⁶ church leaders sometimes tend to follow Confucian ethics as a moral guide—placing high importance on

⁶⁶³ Xunzi, *Xunzi: A Translation and the Study of the Complete Works, Volume III, Books 17–32*, tran. John Knoblock (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 156.

⁶⁶⁴ Sima Qian, *Records of the Grand Historian: Chapters from the Shih Chi of Ssu-ma Ch'ien*, tran. Burton Watson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1969).

⁶⁶⁵ Tang, *Fei baoli shi'er wen*, 351–352.

⁶⁶⁶ Note that Confucian texts are compulsory reading for Chinese language classes in Hong Kong's middle schools. 'Zhongguo yuwen kecheng—zhiding wenyan jingdian xuexi cailiao ziyuan' [Chinese Language Education: Assigned Resources for Learning Classic Chinese], Education Bureau, Hong Kong Special Administration of Region, last updated 29 August 2019, <https://www.edb.gov.hk/tc/curriculum-development/kla/chi-edu/nss-lang/settext-index.html>.

harmonious relationship in church, for example. For them, a slight difference of opinion could lead to quarrel, that is, violence in their language. This is also why Anglican theologian Paul Kwong emphasises the importance of harmony in his writings (see Chapter 2). Nonviolence as a tool promoted by Hauerwas may help Hong Kong Protestants to develop a public theology through rational debate and discussion.

The phrase ‘replacing violence with violence’ (*yi bao yi bao*) mentioned above seems to be similar to the phrase ‘an eye for an eye’ (Exodus 21:24), which affirms the use of violence to engage in revenge. However, for both Hong Kong Hauerwasians and Hauerwas himself, this does not justify the use of violence. Similar to Hauerwas’s discourse, both Huen and Tang argue that nonviolence should not be a one-off activity, and they perceive the Umbrella Movement to be failing in this regard; instead, nonviolence should be practised on a daily basis.⁶⁶⁷ Furthermore, echoing the evangelical theologians discussed in Chapter 4, both Huen and Tang assert that their emphasis on nonviolence should not be taken as an excuse to adapt the model of harmony simply to justify one’s silence.⁶⁶⁸ For Huen and Tang, this is not the true sense of nonviolence—it is not likely that the notion of a harmonious society, as recently articulated by the Chinese government,⁶⁶⁹ is on their agenda.

Huen defines linguistic violence as the language of hurt and harm toward others. It is not merely offensive language, but rather entails a type of oppression in language that generates

⁶⁶⁷ Freeman Huen, ‘Rong bu xia Yelimi? Wangjiao heiye, yanqian “shinian”, Xianggang jiaohui’ [Has Jeremiah Been Abandoned? The Night in Mong Kok, the ‘Ten Years’ Ahead, and Hong Kong Churches], in *Fei baoli shi’er wen* [Twelve Questions on Nonviolence], ed. Andres Tang (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers, 2017), 288–290.

⁶⁶⁸ Huen, ‘Rong bu xia Yelimi?’, 294–295.

⁶⁶⁹ Maureen Fan, ‘China’s Party Leadership Declares New Priority: “Harmonious Society”’, *Washington Post*, 12 October 2006, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/10/11/AR2006101101610.html?>.

structural or cultural violence.⁶⁷⁰ He employs Yoder's discourse on nonviolence to state that the life, passion, and resurrection of Jesus embody nonviolence, and thus that nonviolence can be conceived of as the truth, since Christ reflects the Lord's essence.⁶⁷¹ As a result, Huen opposes the oppressive use of language in discussions because it can be seen as obliging others to agree with certain opinions.⁶⁷² Huen also believes that since Jesus makes no claim on assent, the communicative actions of Christians should be missional or evangelical in nature; that is, the language Christians use toward non-Christians should be inviting and peaceful, and should not be interpreted as forcing others to believe in certain Christian views.⁶⁷³ Despite Huen's support for nonviolence in everyday communication, the question arises as to whether his vigorous discussions with John Chan could be considered violent.⁶⁷⁴ Hong Kongese tends to be familiar with indirect language that follows non-confrontational and compliance strategies⁶⁷⁵ and may feel uncomfortable with the strong language Huen employs in his writings, which may appear to be designed to generate more conflict than peace. This may also give rise to a dilemma as to how Protestant leaders in Hong Kong can bring theological language into the public sphere: they need to be sure that as they propose certain arguments, their language will not make interlocutors feel like they are being forced to accept Christian views. In this way, the use of language is as important a matter as how the arguments are rationally shaped.

⁶⁷⁰ Freeman Huen, "'Naixing zuowei famen': Youda de heping zhishi lun' ['Patience as Tools': Yoder's Epistemology of Peace], in *Heping zhishilun—cong lixing de baoli zouxiang duihua de keneng* [Epistemology of Peace—From Rational Violence to the Possibility of Dialogue], ed. Andres Tang (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers, 2015), 99.

⁶⁷¹ Huen, "'Naixing zuowei famen'", 109; John H. Yoder, *The War of the Lamb: The Ethics of Nonviolence and Peacemaking* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2009), 62.

⁶⁷² Huen, "'Naixing zuowei famen'", 108–109.

⁶⁷³ Huen, "'Naixing zuowei famen'", 114, 126–127.

⁶⁷⁴ As an example, see 'Shenxuejie fengbo' [The Dilemma in the Theological World], 7 October 2017, <https://sites.google.com/view/hytrmndhgdgh>. Although the reference here is written in Cantonese and full of slangs, it gives an idea of how lay Christians objected to the violent language employed by Hong Kong Hauerwasians during their debate with John Chan.

⁶⁷⁵ For details of indirect communication between Chinese people, see Jeanne Boden, *The Wall Behind China's Open Door: Towards Efficient Intercultural Management in China* (Brussels: ASP, 2008), 135.

The next issue concerns why Huen disagrees with the concept of a common good, even though he supports peaceful dialogue with people of other faiths. According to Huen, a totalitarian government (a term he applies to the SAR government) does not offer a just political procedure to define the meaning of the common good. Therefore, he proposes that to be an altruistic person, one should build and bring peace to others (Philippians 2:4) to prevent the common good from becoming a mere compromise or being pursued for one's self-interest.⁶⁷⁶ For Huen, the public witness of bringing peace to others is missional or evangelical. Huen denies public theology to minimise self-interest because, for him, the theological dialogues in the public sphere tend to benefit only one party rather than helping all parties to flourish. While Protestant theologians must show caution about the imperfections of all political systems, in some ways Huen's pessimism seems to contradict Hauerwas's alternative imaginaries. Although Hauerwas asserts that one should let the world be the world, his proposal does not entail disengagement with the world since doing so would merely constitute cynicism. Hauerwas's ecclesiology presses the church to be the witness that attracts those from the world to be part of the church. For me, this kind of testimony is another type of mission or evangelism, which is perhaps different from Huen's understanding of these terms.

In terms of the use of violent language in the public sphere, it is arguable whether the conditions of Hong Kong public sphere is as ideal as in Habermas's theory, as he defines that the sphere should allow everyone to be at a level playing field in a discussion and that no speech will be silenced by opposing opinions.⁶⁷⁷ If violent language is employed as a tool to win an argument, this is likely to be a sign that the conversation already falls outside an ideal speech

⁶⁷⁶ Huen, 'Rong bu xia Yelimi?', 295.

⁶⁷⁷ Jürgen Habermas, *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990), 43–115.

situation. To me, the need to arrive at an ideal speech situation is a struggle for both public intellectuals and public theologians in Hong Kong, and one that they will have to tackle in the future. In light of the intention to construct a public theology for the common good of both Christians and non-Christians in Hong Kong, it is essential to create an acceptable speech situation to ensure a safe environment for those with diverse opinions in the public sphere. Before going through Hauerwas's notion of peaceableness, it will be useful to interpret his perspective on sectarianism and liberalism, so as to know how he interprets the concept of a common good differently and how he may call someone a faithful witness of Christ.

Hauerwas's Perspectives on Sectarianism and Liberalism

In contrast to Huen's approach, which casts Hauerwas's theology as insufficiently sectarian, other theologians have placed the label of sectarianism on Hauerwas, which he has gone to tremendous effort to remove.⁶⁷⁸ One of the major critics of Hauerwas's theology as sectarianism was from his own PhD supervisor, James M. Gustafson (b. 1925). In his article 'Why the "Sectarian Temptation" Is a Misrepresentation: A Response to James Gustafson' in 1988, Hauerwas perceived 'Gustafson's attitude [as] odd, as [Gustafson] seems to assume that the only option for a Christian is either *complete* involvement in culture or *complete* withdrawal.'

⁶⁷⁹ Hauerwas's proposal is to create an alternative 'to help Christians better understand the positive and negative aspects of their societies and guide their subsequent selective participation.'⁶⁸⁰ As stated in 'Will the Real Sectarian Stand Up?', an article he wrote a year

⁶⁷⁸ For details, see James M. Gustafson, 'The Sectarian Temptation: Reflections on Theology, the Church, and the University', *Proceedings of the Catholic Theological Society of America* 40 (1985): 86.

⁶⁷⁹ Stanley Hauerwas, 'Why the "Sectarian Temptation" Is a Misrepresentation: A Response to James Gustafson', in *The Hauerwas Reader*, ed. Michael G. Cartwright and John Berkman (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 102, emphasis in original.

⁶⁸⁰ Hauerwas, 'Why the "Sectarian Temptation" Is a Misrepresentation', 102.

earlier, this is to facilitate ‘the church in a manner such that [it] can serve society imaginatively by not being captured by societal options or corresponding governmental policy.’⁶⁸¹ For him, such a position does not mean the church is to withdraw from any public policy matters.⁶⁸² He notes that certain issues such as poverty and nuclear war should be addressed by churches. The key aspects are to have ‘a sense of selective service and the ability to set priorities’.⁶⁸³ Therefore, as a pacifist, he has no intention of requesting that Christians withdraw from their own communities, just as he has not done so as a university teacher or as a US citizen. He argues, however, that ‘at times and in some circumstances Christians will find it impossible to participate in government, in aspects of the economy, or in the educational system. Yet such determinations can be made only by developing the skills of discrimination fostered in and through the church.’⁶⁸⁴ Therefore, in spite of the critiques of his Christ-against-culture tendencies, I do not consider his theology either sectarian or escapist, as he does intend to develop social ethics that can engage in dialogue with the world.

In terms of political liberalism, Hauerwas shows his disapproval by indicating its weakness: ‘[it] is a liberal society that forces that distinction by believing that a good society is possible abstracted from a people being good.’⁶⁸⁵ In other words, liberalism gives citizens the excuse that they do not have to be good to build a better society, in contrast to Hauerwas’s position that Christians should be witnesses for Jesus, who brings peace to society. Therefore, as long as Christians maintain their nonviolent participation, they should have ‘a high stake in developing political processes’.⁶⁸⁶ Furthermore, although he is known to be a critic of liberalism,

⁶⁸¹ Stanley Hauerwas, ‘Will the Real Sectarian Stand Up?’, *Theology Today* 44, 1 (1987): 90.

⁶⁸² Hauerwas, ‘Will the Real Sectarian Stand Up?’, 90.

⁶⁸³ Hauerwas, ‘Why the “Sectarian Temptation” Is a Misrepresentation’, 106.

⁶⁸⁴ Hauerwas, ‘Why the “Sectarian Temptation” Is a Misrepresentation’, 106.

⁶⁸⁵ Hauerwas, ‘Will the Real Sectarian Stand Up?’, 91.

⁶⁸⁶ Hauerwas, ‘Will the Real Sectarian Stand Up?’, 90–91.

he rightly points out that this kind of critique is not a total rejection of secular civilisation or of liberalism. Instead, liberalism can help to limit state power to ‘encourage public cooperation for the maintenance of good community’.⁶⁸⁷ But liberalism has its limitations in the sense that, despite a liberal government’s claim to implementing policy for the freedom of individuals, the policy itself can sometimes be harmful to individuals for the sake of freedom. I suspect that this kind of discernment should be applied to every kind of political ideology, not only to liberalism; for example, despite the many benefits democracy may bring to society, there are also limitations if the majority voice is toxic to society, such as the rise of populism in the Global North. This is also the reason Huen is sceptical of the Hong Kong government. Due to the limitation of individuals, whether Christians or not, Hauerwas argues for the peaceable witness in Christ, regardless of one’s political standpoint.

It is also known that Hauerwas is a strong opponent of Protestant liberalism in the American context; however, one may ask how his criticism matters to Hong Kong, since Hauerwas mainly addresses the issues in the United States. Although Protestantism liberalism is not a major trend in Hong Kong, the fear that prevents evangelicals to engage with the public is that they may compromise too much with the world. In *Resident Aliens*, Hauerwas and William Willimon comment on Protestant liberalism that ‘[they] had lost the theological resources to resist, lost the resources even to see that there was something worth resisting’.⁶⁸⁸ Rather than seeing Hauerwas’s disagreement of American liberalism as irrelevant to Hong Kong Christians, I consider his resistance is the reason why his theology may fit into a Hong Kong public theology, which tries to find a third space between theological liberalism and a total disengagement with

⁶⁸⁷ Hauerwas, ‘Will the Real Sectarian Stand Up?’, 93.

⁶⁸⁸ Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1989), 27.

the public. Despite the difficulty to find a balance in between, his Christian ethics may help to stimulate discussions on how the Christian community can be a peaceable witness to society.

A Peaceable Witness in a Violent World

Although I do not entirely disagree with Huen's argument that Christian witness has to be demonstrated in the course of one's daily life, it is nevertheless important to discern how Hong Kong Protestants can testify to Christ in the protests: is it enough to 'Sing Hallelujah to the Lord'?⁶⁸⁹ What if the protesting community is more peaceful than the world outside the protests? And what sort of discourse do Hong Kong public theologians have to construct?

Here, I would like to propose a type of peaceable witness that can help us to reflect on the situation in Hong Kong. Unlike the contemporary discourse of a harmonious society in Mainland China, which is also proposed for Hong Kong by the SAR government,⁶⁹⁰ I would like to suggest that the harmonious relationships among Hong Kong citizens do not silence the discourse espoused by Hong Kong evangelicals, but rather allow different voices in society to be heard, whether one is for or against social movements. Hauerwas's theology is useful in that it is constructed based on one's narrative and testimony to the world, and does not focus on winning arguments or dominating a conversation.

⁶⁸⁹ For the widespread use of the song 'Sing Hallelujah to the Lord' in the anti-extradition law protests, see Zhao Yan and Catherine Lai, "'Sing Hallelujah to the Lord': Religion on the Forefront of Hong Kong's Protests", *Hong Kong Free Press*, 30 June 2019, <https://www.hongkongfp.com/2019/06/30/sing-hallelujah-lord-religion-forefront-hong-kongs-protests/>.

⁶⁹⁰ For example, in a speech Carrie Lam delivered in January 2019, she commented that to be prosperous and stable, Hong Kong should have a harmonious society and cooperate with the wider development of China. See 'Lin Zhengyue'e zhi Xianggang yao fanrong anding, shehui tuanjie hexie buke huo que' [Carrie Lam Indicates that to Be Prosper and Stable, Hong Kong Should Have a Harmonious Society], *Headline*, 19 January 2019, <https://bit.ly/35MJqK7>.

Returning to Hauerwas's acclamation for those willing to live out of control, as discussed in Chapter 5,⁶⁹¹ he argues that Christian ethics concern not only people in power who are able to change history through their discourse or position, but anyone who decides to follow the way of Christ. Through their eschatological hope, such people have the patience to be Christ's witness, despite the imperfect nature of the world. Peaceableness does not mean that peace will immediately arrive on earth after one becomes a Christian or embraces faith in Christ; instead, it implies that the vision one may hold through Christ may not be realised before one goes to heaven. This is a duty that Jesus commands every Christian to uphold and therefore in spite of the lack of efficacy of one's individual witness, one has faith in God to live out of control. This realisation becomes essential in light of the totalitarian approach of the Hong Kong government. One could easily lose hope as a result of the worsening situation in Hong Kong society, or the increasingly dichotomised political views due to the ongoing protests; thus, continual reflection on Jesus's life and his testimony is necessary if Christians are truly to believe that his teachings guide them to realise the kingdom of God.⁶⁹²

Hauerwas's ecclesiology could be criticised in terms of its countercultural tendencies and the isolation of the church community that it entails. For example, Steffen Losel, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at the Candler School of Theology, Emory University, has challenged its applicability to the American context because although they state that Christians need to live differently, Hauerwasians—whom Losel terms as 'the countercultural colonists'—do not fully apply a radical nonconformity that clearly discusses when, where, and how the church should distinguish itself from the surrounding culture.⁶⁹³ For Losel, the countercultural

⁶⁹¹ Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, 104–105.

⁶⁹² Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, 75.

⁶⁹³ Steffen Losel, 'The Kirchenkampf of the Countercultural Colony: A Critical Response', *Theology Today* 67 (2010): 285.

rhetoric of Hauerwas's theology is both its strength and its weakness, because it does not 'acknowledge sufficiently how interwoven all ecclesial communities are with their cultural surroundings'—as is the case in American society.⁶⁹⁴ According to Losel, this model is easier to apply to the 'younger churches', especially in Africa, because they 'have never enjoyed the comforts of a Christendom-like situation'; in this way, a radical nonconformist model helps them to reflect on the church's relationship to its surrounding culture, which is a culture barely affected by Christianity before its arrival.⁶⁹⁵

Losel's concerns seem to be less applicable to Hong Kong. Firstly, given that Hong Kong society at large lacks a Christian background, Hong Kong Protestant churches experience a culture rather different from that of the United States, where Christians are in higher proportion. Being a Christian in Hong Kong is countercultural by default, because one may need to explicitly detach oneself from the practice of folk religions, such as ancestor veneration and worshipping gods in commercial settings.⁶⁹⁶ Secondly, since Christians are a minority in society, the church community in Hong Kong cannot and will not be a separate entity that does not have any interaction with the world, which is another aspect of Hauerwas's ecclesiology that Losel criticised.⁶⁹⁷ In some ways, churches are alternative communities for Hong Kong Christians, who are also members of other communities in society.

To return to the matter of nonviolence, the question most readers may ask is: are Christians allowed to employ violence if they are facing a totalitarian regime that continues to oppress them with violent force? Kung Lap-yan's interpretation of Hauerwas's theology through Christ's

⁶⁹⁴ Losel, 'The Kirchenkampf of the Countercultural Colony', 291–292.

⁶⁹⁵ Losel, 'The Kirchenkampf of the Countercultural Colony', 286.

⁶⁹⁶ For details, see Janet Lee Scott, *For Gods, Ghosts and Ancestors: The Chinese Tradition of Paper Offerings* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2007).

⁶⁹⁷ Losel, 'The Kirchenkampf of the Countercultural Colony', 292–294.

witness can be illuminative in this regard. His argument is developed through the story in Luke 22:47–53, in which Jesus’s disciples become angry at the high priest’s attempt to arrest Jesus and one of the disciples cuts off the ear of the high priest’s servant. Kung states that, although Jesus was a victim of a violent system, his first reaction was to prevent his disciples from visiting further acts of violence upon his oppressors, and he then decided to heal the wounded servant. For Kung, despite Jesus’s disciples’ rationalisation of violence in an unjust scenario, Christians should do their best to protect the weak and the wounded.⁶⁹⁸ Jesus’s example fulfils Isaiah’s prophesy that he brought good news to the poor and let the oppressed go free (Luke 4:19). Jesus’s bravery in facing the darkness helps to establish a community that continues his mission in the world—that is, the church. Although the world may perceive the church as losing because it cannot efficiently change the violent systems, the church community is still faithful to God as the light of the world in the midst of darkness.⁶⁹⁹ Hauerwas’s nonviolence and his highlighting of communal witness are clearly shown in Kung’s theology, and even Kung himself admits that Hauerwas is one of the major influences on his own theology.⁷⁰⁰

In the same way, Hauerwas would likely agree with the use of this kind of nonviolence in the Hong Kong context. When the government chooses to use violence towards its citizens, whether via the police or by other means, Hong Kong citizens—including the church community—have the right to fight back in self-defence; but are there other alternatives that may enhance the dialogue, rather than taking ‘an eye for an eye’? As the light and the salt of the earth,

⁶⁹⁸ Kung Lap-yan, ‘Shouhaizhe keyi xuanze yibaoyibao ma? Dui Saerduo renmin weixian huiyi de shenxue fanxing’ [Can Victims Repay Evil for Evil? A Theological Reflection on the Dangerous Memories of Salvadorans], in *Fei baoli shi’er wen* [Twelve Questions on Nonviolence], ed. Andres Tang (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers, 2017), 205–209.

⁶⁹⁹ Kung, ‘Shouhaizhe keyi xuanze yi bao zhi bao ma?’, 209.

⁷⁰⁰ Kung, ‘Shouhaizhe keyi xuanze yi bao zhi bao ma?’, 187.

perhaps the church could reconsider and reimagine other possibilities to be Christ's witness to the world.

The Communality of the Church

In contrast to Hauerwas's notion of the communality of the church, one of the main weaknesses of contemporary public theologies in Hong Kong is the overemphasis on individual commitments to public issues. Following the logic of individual conversion to evangelicalism, where collectivism is not a concern,⁷⁰¹ the decision to engage with public theologies, for some evangelicals, becomes an individual choice,⁷⁰² as such, the literature on this topic, especially studies focussed on the Global North, seldom discusses how the church community can testify to God as a whole.⁷⁰³ In this section, I will argue through Hauerwas's ecclesiology that the public witness of Christianity does refer not only to individuals but also to the community to which they belong. This approach could well be more suitable for the Hong Kong context, in which communitarian values are the norm of society.

In the continual protests in Hong Kong, almost no one is in doubt about whether the societal dispute is a personal matter, and the church should therefore be the first community to show its peaceableness in the world. Today, many Christian youths in Hong Kong struggle with isolation in evangelical churches because sermons and church communities appear disconnected from their experiences in the Umbrella Movement or the anti-extradition law protests, since

⁷⁰¹ For details, see David W. Bebbington and David Ceri Jones, *Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism in the United Kingdom during the Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5–10.

⁷⁰² This is also put forward by Ying Fuk-tsang and Lai Pan-chiu, when they discuss the political apathy of most Christians in 1970s Hong Kong. For details, see Ying Fuk-tsang and Lai Pan-chiu, 'Diasporic Chinese Communities and Protestantism in Hong Kong During the 1950s', *Studies in World Christianity* 10, 1 (2004): 150.

⁷⁰³ Rare exceptions are Sebastian Kim's discussions of Indian churches and Alexander Chow's analysis of Chinese churches. See Sebastian C. H. Kim, *Theology in the Public Sphere* (London: SCM Press, 2011), 79–108; Chow, *Chinese Public Theology*, 146–159.

many pastors choose not to talk about politics from the pulpit, or even in churches at all, to avoid disharmony. The discourse in the churches and the question of whether or not to touch on political matters are dominated by deacons and pastoral leaders. Instead of merely being constructed from on high by authorities, the task of public theology, then, is to rebuild a lived theology which narrates the lived experience of the church community. This would perhaps broaden and enrich the current discourse of public theologies, especially those of the church, which is one of the main publics in Hong Kong.

As Hauerwas famously suggested in *A Community of Character*: ‘the primary social task of the church is to be itself—that is, a people who have been formed by a story that provides them with the skills for negotiating the danger of this existence, trusting in God’s promise of redemption’.⁷⁰⁴ There are several themes to consider here based on the discussions in Chapters 2–4, such as how the hybrid identities of Hong Kong citizens can be expressed in this type of theology, and how people’s varied experiences in the protests or through the daily dialogues with others can help to construct a public theology that truly represents Hong Kongese. Hauerwas’s emphasis on a narrative is particularly helpful. The stories created by the people of God point back to the story of Jesus, who first constructed a story that inspired his disciples to follow him. Christ’s narrative thus becomes a guide that shows how those who are faithful to his words can live in a chaotic world and narrate an alternative story to those around them. These storied people can then help to build a storied society,⁷⁰⁵ based on experiences such as those gained in the Hong Kong protests.⁷⁰⁶ Hauerwas’s emphasis is not merely about the past, as stated in the scripture, but is also about the present, for how protesters deal with the world.

⁷⁰⁴ Hauerwas, *A Community of Character*, 10.

⁷⁰⁵ Hauerwas, *A Community of Character*, 90–91.

⁷⁰⁶ When one talks about a theology developed from stories in the Asian context, some may be reminded of the story theology developed by C.S. Song, a Taiwanese American theologian who attempted to construct a theology

As Joshua Cho rightly indicates in his book *Human Nature and Virtue*, in which he analyses Hauerwas's theology, Christians not only have to be witnesses to Christ by living out his story, but also have to witness to people outside churches as an alternative community—to show them how the Christian life is different from that of the world and thus draws people to know the word of God through personal testimonies.⁷⁰⁷ This course of action defends Hauerwas's own theology. His emphasis on the narrative does not merely come from an anthropological perspective, as his narrative theology is based on the biblical narrative. This is of the ultimate importance for Hauerwas because a Christian narrative should be developed from Christ.⁷⁰⁸ Furthermore, as discussed in the previous sections of this chapter, a public theology that engages with Hauerwas's ecclesiology may not be as detached as one might first think since it requires the church community to build stories through its interactions with the world, despite the differences between the church and the world.

Considering the previous dialogues around Hong Kong identity, indicate that it is undeniable that there has been a continuous shift of identity among Hong Kong citizens, based on their various experiences in society. Again, my intention here is not to pinpoint the exact identity of Hong Kong citizens—whether one chooses to label someone Hong Kongese, Chinese, or Hong Kong Chinese does not help to construct the discourse. Instead, I hope to open the space for every Christian in Hong Kong who perceives himself or herself to be a part of Hong Kong, yet struggles to develop a theology through his or her lived experiences. A recent example of the construction of this kind of dialogue through identity is the Umbrella Cyberchurch, founded after

through the stories of Asian people, in light of their religiously pluralistic environment. However, the types of stories developed in Song's work include both myths and lived experience, while the stories which construct the public theology in this thesis only focus on lived experience in post-1997 Hong Kong. For details of Song's story theology, see C. S. Song, *The Believing Heart: An Invitation to Story Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999).

⁷⁰⁷ Cho, *Renxing yu dexing*, 159–161.

⁷⁰⁸ Joshua Cho, *Xushi yu lunli—hou ziyou xushi shenshe shangxi* [*Narrative and Ethics: Interpreting Postliberal Narrative Theology*] (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Baptist Theological Seminary, 2005).

the Umbrella Movement, which considers its members ‘Umbrella citizens’ because of their heavy involvement in the Movement.⁷⁰⁹ This kind of contextual and public theology is illustrated through the stories they built in the Movement, which become a collective experience for the Christian community.

One could gain helpful insight from the testimony of the former Archbishop of Bukavu, Christopher Munzihirwa (1926–1996), who employed a nonviolent approach to oppose the violent regime in the Democratic Republic of Congo. When the Rwandan Genocide caused a huge influx of refugees from Rwanda into Bukavu, Congo, near Rwanda’s western border, Munzihirwa reminded the Rwandan refugees that ‘we cannot transform the social system without reforming ourselves first, provoking in ourselves a renovation of spiritual and moral life, digging down to the personal, spiritual, and moral foundations of human life, and renewing spiritual and moral ideas that preside over social life’.⁷¹⁰ For Munzihirwa, it is necessary to cultivate peace rather than violence in our daily lives, and in the long term, peaceableness will change the social structure.⁷¹¹ This aligns with Huen’s vision that one should act nonviolently in the course of one’s daily life, so that nonviolence becomes sustainable in the long term.

Nonetheless, the construction of a public theology through lived experience is especially important, especially now that the circulation of misinformation has become widespread on social media and in daily life. This is also the position of Kung Lap-yan, who promotes the importance of narrative via liberation theology that concerns grassroots citizens.⁷¹² Through the

⁷⁰⁹ ‘Guanyu women’ [About Us], The Umbrella City Cyberchurch, accessed 1 July 2018, <http://web.archive.org/web/20180701155626/http://www.ucchk.org/38364260442510520497.html>.

⁷¹⁰ Quoted and translated in Emmanuel Katongole, *Born from Lament: The Theology and Politics of Hope in Africa* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2017), 167; Sébastien Muyengo Mulombe, *Christophe Munzihirwa: La Sentinelle des Grands Lacs* (Kinshasa: Afriquespoir, 2011), 17–18.

⁷¹¹ Katongole, *Born from Lament*, 168–169.

⁷¹² Although the current framework of liberation theology is expanded to class, race, and culture, as Kung has observed, most define the poor according to socioeconomic status. Thus, this is my main hesitation to apply liberation theology to the Hong Kong context: While I consider that Hong Kong citizens to be politically oppressed,

narrative built by the church community, truthfulness can become a virtue employed by every Hong Kong citizen, and even for Christians who have, through their lives as part of the world, been immersed in misinformation. A truthful narrative can help to develop an alternative imaginary for both Christians and non-Christians, and thus realise a peaceable kingdom.⁷¹³

Three Christian Narratives in Post-1997 Hong Kong

For Hauerwas, testimony is not only illustrated through the action of withdrawal for certain unjust issues, but also demonstrated through acting according to Jesus's teaching. To show how Hauerwas's theology can be applied to the Hong Kong context, the three examples below will discuss its realisation through the Christian narratives in the Hong Kong protests. The first concerns Occupy Central with Love and Peace, a campaign initiated by Christian leaders to promote universal suffrage of the Chief Executive of Hong Kong; the second example of *Sing Hallelujah to the Lord* shows the response from grassroots Christians; and the third, in contrast, demonstrates a pastoral reaction to the extradition law that is not bounded by the pastors' own denominations.

I doubt that liberation theology, which is more inclined towards material scarcity, appropriately fits in the context of Hong Kong, where citizens have the fifteenth highest GDP per capita according to the statistics of the International Monetary Fund. For the GDP figures, see 'Gross Domestic Product per Capita, Current Prices', International Monetary Fund, accessed 20 April 2020, <https://bit.ly/2KfNNF4>. For Kung's discussion, Kung Lap-yan, *Zai an jiao yanshuo shang zhu [Dialogue with God in the Darkness]* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong Christian Institute, 2016), 191–192; For the elaboration of the meaning of the poor, see Gustavo Gutiérrez, 'Renewing the Option for the Poor', in *Liberation Theologies, Postmodernity, and the Americas*, edited by David Batstone et al. (London: Routledge, 1997), 70–71.

For further analysis of liberation theology in Hong Kong, see Sam Tsang, 'Exegeting the Occupation of Hong Kong: The Umbrella Movement as a Battleground for Liberation Hermeneutics', in *Theological Reflections on the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement: Asian Christianity in the Diaspora*, ed. Justin K.H. Tse and Jonathan Y. Tan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 131–138; Kung Lap-yan, 'In Search of True-ness: Dialogue between Political Localism and Theological Ecumenism in Post-Umbrella Movement', *International Journal of Public Theology*, 11 (2017): 431–454; Kung Lap-yan, 'Christian Discipleship Today', PhD diss., University of Glasgow, 1994.

⁷¹³ Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, 93.

Example 1: Occupy Central with Love and Peace

Occupy Central with Love and Peace was a campaign established in 2013 to urge for universal suffrage of the Chief Executive of Hong Kong, as promised by Basic Law Article 45. To demand that the Hong Kong government implement this law, Benny Tai, Associate Professor of Law at the University of Hong Kong; Chan Kin-man, Associate Professor of Sociology at the CUHK; and Chu Yiu-ming, Senior Pastor at Chai Wan Baptist Church, initiated the discussions of Occupy Central as a strategy to urge the government to fulfil universal suffrage. By 31 August 2014, the government decided not to implement universal suffrage and to retain the current election method for the Chief Executive of Hong Kong, to the disappointment of OCLP and of several democratic parties and student unions.

As the three leaders of OCLP have stressed on several occasions, this campaign does not belong to Christians; however, spirituality has played an important role in this movement.⁷¹⁴ In an interview about the Movement, two weeks before his final trial, Chan expressed that his urge for democracy was due to his quest for the Christian God:

I will empty myself to seek for God's will in this space and time, for what I should do as a Christian ... I believe human beings have many limitations which may cause deviations [of their judgment]. Thus, I do not think every Christian should accept 'Occupy Central'. This will not lead to good results ... If you honestly ask God in this context, what Jesus would do ... I think divergent answers are acceptable.⁷¹⁵

⁷¹⁴ Ying Fuk-tsang, "'Wo de shengming yi you shui bian jiu': Chen Jianmin de xinyang yu shijian" ['My Life Has Been Transformed from Water to Wine': Chan Kin-Man's Faith and Practice], *Shidai luntan* [Christian Times], 22 March 2019, <http://bit.ly/2U22RfR>.

⁷¹⁵ Ying, 'Wo de shengming yi you shui bian jiu'.

Indeed, Chan states that the only theology courses he took in his undergraduate years at the CUHK were Archie Lee's hermeneutics and Kwok Pui-lan's Christian ethics. However, according to his line of thought, it can be argued that his approach to social issues is quite Hauerwasian, because he would ask what Jesus would do in this context and what deviations are acceptable due to God's will acting differently on different people. Although Chan has not intended to present himself as a Christian in this movement, his testimony shows how a Christian narrative can be illustrated in a less-than-perfect society, which led to his research on civil society and democracy.⁷¹⁶

Example 2: Sing Hallelujah to the Lord

Music has been a major component in the anti-extradition law protests. While several songs emerged, such as the newly composed *Glory to Hong Kong*⁷¹⁷ and *Do You Hear the People Sing* from the musical *Les Misérables*,⁷¹⁸ this example will focus on a Christian song widely sung during the early stage of the protest: *Sing Hallelujah to the Lord*. According to the interviewed protesters, they chose the song because 'it is easy for people to follow, with a simple message and easy melody.'⁷¹⁹ But the reason behind the use of the song is more complex than that. As the police does not have the right to stop public gatherings organised for religious

⁷¹⁶ In the interview mentioned above, Chan stated that he pursued a research career on sociology due to his Christian belief to care for the poor in Hong Kong society. For details, see Ying, 'Wo de shengming yi you shui bian jiu'.

⁷¹⁷ Verna Yu, "'Glory to Hong Kong': Pro-Democracy Anthem Embraced by Protesters', *The Guardian*, 12 September 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/sep/12/glory-to-hong-kong-pro-democracy-anthem-embraced-by-protesters>.

⁷¹⁸ Zamira Rahim, 'The Song from *Les Misérables* That Has Become a Protest Anthem in Hong Kong', *The Independent*, 29 August 2019, <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/features/les-miserables-hong-kong-protests-do-you-hear-the-people-sing-musical-a9081401.html>.

⁷¹⁹ Jessie Pang and Marius Zaharia, "'Sing Hallelujah to the Lord": An Unlikely Anthem of Hong Kong Protests', *Reuters*, 18 June 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-hongkong-extradition-protesters-halle/sing-hallelujah-to-the-lord-an-unlikely-anthem-of-hong-kong-protests-idUSKCN1TJ16T>.

purposes under the Hong Kong Public Order Ordinance, Protestants used this to gather on the street so they were not against the legislation laws and thus would not be dispersed by the police.⁷²⁰ In spite of its origins—written by the American composer Linda Stassen (b. 1951) for Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, California,⁷²¹ with no previous direct link to Hong Kong Christianity—the hymn’s simplicity and its repetitive stanzas appealed to both Christian and non-Christian protesters.

One may argue that this kind of performance produces a type of narrative theology Hauerwas emphasises. By ‘performance’ here, I refer not only to singing as a musical performance, but also to the Christian presence in the protest areas as an act of performance that illustrates a testimony to their witnesses. In spite of the previously negative perception from non-Christian circles, which give Hong Kong Christians the nickname ‘Jesus’s Jerk’ (*Ye nian*), most non-Christians were impressed by Christians’ tenacity to sing continuously for three days and nights.⁷²² On the online forum *Lian Deng*, the major platform for conducting strategical planning for the protests, one participant even persuaded, ‘Do not call them “Jesus’s Jerk”, they are really God’s messenger.’⁷²³ The Christians’ testimony in the protests is visible through singing and their physical presence in the protest areas. This is perhaps what Hauerwas describes—the singers were simply there as Christians. Despite the passivity non-Christians may perceive due to

⁷²⁰ Hong Kong e-Legislation, Cap. 245, 17, 2b, updated 12 December 2019, https://www.elegislation.gov.hk/hk/cap245?xpid=ID_1438402885700_003.

⁷²¹ J.R. Watson and Emma Hornby, ‘Linda Stassen’, in *The Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology*, accessed 22 January 2020, <https://hymnology.hymnsam.co.uk/l/linda-stassen>.

⁷²² Lui Lai-sin, ‘6.12 yi ge yue: You kaifang jiaohui dao sing Hallelujah, yanxiao xia de hongzhuan shengdian [One Month after 12 June: From Opening the Door of the Church to Singing Hallelujah, the Red-Bricked Cathedral under the Tear Gas], *Apple Daily*, 12 July 2019, <https://hk.news.appledaily.com/local/realtime/article/20190712/59811425>.

⁷²³ ‘Ye nian: Shi duo wei mushi zai lifa hui damen zui qianxian shou tuo shou dangzhe jingcha, bu rang tamen dui xuesheng dongwu’ [Jesus’s Jerk: More Than 10 Pastors Holding Hands Together before the Front Door of Legislative Council to Forbid Police to Attack Students], *Lian Deng*, 12 June 2019, <https://lihkg.com/thread/1207064/>.

the previous political apathy of certain Christian groups, the presence of Christian lay persons in the protests illustrates an alternative imaginary for them, showing that the Christians can share the struggle together, through their peaceful singing, in the midst of the fear that the extradition laws may impose on them in the near future.

Example 3: Pastoral Leaders' Care Group and the Hong Kong Pastors Network

In 2014, before the outbreak of the Umbrella Movement, Rev. Wu Chi-wai, along with thirty pastors of different denominations, established the Pastoral Leaders' Care Group (*Jiaomu guanhuai tuan*, abbreviated as PLCG below) as a response to political movements outside their own denominations, while standing together as a group.⁷²⁴ For example, during the Movement, some members of the PLCG set up a booth in the occupying areas to provide pastoral counselling and pray for those who approached the booth. Those who served in the protest areas were all prepared to be arrested. In addition to the physical presence in the protest areas, in 2019, the PLCG also set up the Co-drafting Committee of Hong Kong Pastoral Leaders (*Xianggang jidujiao jiao mu lian shu chou wei hui*), which was renamed as the Hong Kong Pastors Network (*Xianggang jiao mu wangluo*, abbreviated as the HKPN below) on 8 May 2020. The HKPN was first established for pastors to release statements in regards to the extradition laws. The network is independent of any denomination, which allows the members the flexibility to express their theology publicly, without the limitations of the doctrines of their own denominations. They seem to have learnt from the mistakes in the Umbrella Movement—the HKPN acts as a platform

⁷²⁴ Yeung Chi-ki, 'Yundong zhong de "jiuhuo" mushi: Tamen dang jingcha, chang shengshi, zhiyuan nanqingren' [Pastors Who 'Extinguish Fire' in the Movement: They Blocked the Police, Sang Hymns, and Helped Youngsters], *Duan chuanmei* [*The Initium*], 5 July 2019, <https://theinitium.com/article/20190705-hongkong-chritian-protest-pastors/>.

to respond to social issues and issue public statements without being bounded by their pastoral roles in their own denominations due to complicated procedures and diverse opinions.

Since 9 June 2019, the day two million people protested on the street against extradition laws, the HKPN started the prayer campaign ‘Free from the Fear of Exile: Praying Together About the Peace of This City’ (*Mian yu Beijing lu de kongju, tong wei zhe cheng diu ping'an qidao yundong*).⁷²⁵ Through the collective contributions by pastoral leaders from different denominations, the campaign expressed solidarity with the suffering of all Hong Kong citizens and provided a public theology to both Christians and non-Christians for guidance in the midst of fear about implementing the ‘evil laws’, as the HKPN called them. Again, their collective action can be perceived as a Christian performance. According to Elaine Graham, Grosvenor Research Professor of Practical Theology at the University of Chester, ‘the post-liberal theology of George Lindbeck reminds us that the test of faith is not its correspondence with propositional truth but its capacity to facilitate Christian performance.’⁷²⁶ For Graham, one of the major motifs of post-secular public theology is Christian apologetics. Through the performance of oneself, the Christian communities can achieve the second motif—speaking truth to power.⁷²⁷

The performance of the HKPN is undoubtedly a Christian apologetic, as it demonstrates the willingness of those pastors to walk with everyone in Hong Kong, and especially with those who are heavily involved in the protests. Furthermore, through the petition to God in prayers and through interacting with other users on their Facebook page, the HKPN shows their determination to speak truth to the power, despite their sense of powerlessness as shown in some

⁷²⁵ Hong Kong Pastors Network, ‘Mian yu Beijing lu de kongju, tong wei zhe cheng diu ping'an qidao yundong’ [Free from the Fear of Exile: Praying Together About the Peace of This City], 9 June 2019, <https://bit.ly/2OI3Io6>.

⁷²⁶ Elaine Graham, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Public Theology in a Post-Secular Age* (London: SCM Press, 2013), 212.

⁷²⁷ Graham, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*, 212–213.

of the prayers. This becomes increasingly important, in light of the spread of inaccurate information regarding the anti-extradition law protests in the media. Notably, the stories of the pastors in the PLCG were mainly recorded by local secular newspapers rather than in Christian media.⁷²⁸ Their performance was shown not only to their congregations, but also to protesters, as well as to other Hong Kong citizens who felt helpless with a government not listening to their people. The HKPN, who had already been with the citizens since the Umbrella Movement, became ‘skilful’ practitioners through their continuous witnesses in the protests, and their actions form the stories of Jesus’s followers in the Hong Kong context.⁷²⁹ This kind of performance would probably be approved by Hauerwas, who emphasises the importance of Christian testimony.

Reflections of the Christian Narratives

The above examples illustrate a narrative theology with three different aspects: spirituality, hymnology, and prayer. Indeed, each of them offers an alternative to the seemingly unpeaceful world. In the first example, OCLP envisioned a better world with universal suffrage, and hence it offers a nonviolent approach to Hong Kong citizens who hoped to improve the SAR through democracy. For OCLP, constructing peaceful dialogue with the government and with different political parties is its main concern, and civil disobedience, as Benny Tai claimed, is the last weapon.⁷³⁰ The second example, the protesters who performed *Sing Hallelujah to the Lord*, aimed to give a peaceable witness when the city was immersed with anxiety. Even before the rise

⁷²⁸ The only exception is the *Christian Times*, which also has coverage of the PLCG. Online church media may mention them, but the posts are usually forwarded from local newspapers. Yeung, ‘Yundong zhong de “jiuhuo” mushi:’, Lui, ‘6.12 yi ge yue’.

⁷²⁹ Graham, *Between a Rock and a Hard Place*, 214.

⁷³⁰ Tai, ‘Gongmin kangming de zuida shashangli wuqi’.

of the valiant (*yongwu pai*)⁷³¹ in the anti-extradition law protests, this group of singers intended to be a Christian witness in the protests, which motivated other (non-Christian) protesters to join the performance. The third example, the HKPN, guided its Facebook followers through peaceful prayers, as a contrasting performance to the anxiety both in the media and on the street. To provide a different vision to Hong Kong Christians, while identifying the structural violence the government may assert to its citizens, the HKPN lamented with anyone who cared about the future of the Pearl of the East.

To be fair, OCLP and the singers in the anti-extradition law protests did not intend to develop a Christology and ecclesiology, unlike the HKPN, who aimed to nurture lay persons through written prayers. However, one may argue that through the performance of the singers, they created a type of ecclesiology that was not bound by church buildings, and thus, using Hauerwas's terms, became an alternative community in the protests. Applying Hauerwas's logic to these three examples, it seems that he would agree with this kind of witnesses—through their presence as Christians in this deeply violent world, they brought alternatives to work for justice based on their Christian convictions.

Conclusion

I must confess that, although I am a Hong Kong Baptist who has employed Hauerwas's theology in this thesis, I have never considered myself to be a Hong Kong Hauerwasian, if this term refers to the theologies developed by Huen, Lau, and Tang. The reason for this is not simply about the online dispute between Hong Kong Hauerwasians and other Hong Kong theologians;

⁷³¹ Austin Ramzy, 'In Hong Kong, Unity between Peaceful and Radical Protesters. For Now', *The New York Times*, 27 September 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/27/world/asia/hong-kong-protests-violence.html>.

as outlined above, I follow a different approach to Hauerwasian theology that draws me in a different direction regarding social and political involvement. However, were I to employ Hauerwas's interpretation of Wang and Ting in terms of their theological engagement with the public sphere, I would deem Hong Kong Hauerwasians to be true to their convictions because they perceive their disengagement to be another way of witnessing for Christ in the world. In an already dichotomised Hong Kong society, it would not be helpful to alienate other theologians as if I were the only one to possess the Truth. This could be said to hark back to our previous conversations about how harmony can exist in a pluralistic society.

For Hauerwas, Christians should be present in the world by being there as Christians and to guide anyone, whether Christian or non-Christian, to understand Jesus's commandments because they affect individuals' lives, as well as the public sphere. As Christians, we are reminded by Hauerwas that those we oppose are also God's creatures; they are our brothers and sisters, even if they hold a different theological view from our own. Despite different political and theological standpoints, our goal should be to help God's creatures to draw closer to their creator. If we consider theology to be a faith-seeking process, as stated in Anselm's (1033–1109) famous quote about 'faith seeking understanding', theology is not as static as one assumes but rather a continual discernment in every Christian's life, whether or not he or she chooses to engage with the public sphere theologically. The Umbrella Movement and the anti-extradition law protests are merely two key events that have triggered Hong Kong theologians to continually reflect on their theological engagement with the world.

Last but not least, in spite of the assumption that the term 'Hong Kong Hauerwasian' first developed in the debates between John Chan and the Hong Kong Hauerwasians on the election of the selection committee for the Chief Executive of Hong Kong, it should be reiterated that the

rise of Hauerwasian discourse did not merely spring from this discussion, but is the result of the continuous quest of different Hong Kong theologians to ponder the meaning of nonviolence and peaceableness, partly through the Umbrella Movement. Although few of them have used Hauerwas's theology to deconstruct the meaning of nonviolence and peaceableness, it is evident that some are drawn by Hauerwas's understanding of these two terms to reconsider the communal witness of Protestants in a dichotomised society. As the protests continue, these two themes will probably recur and be further developed in the context of Hong Kong public theology, based on the narratives of the Christian community.

CONCLUSION

Christian theology needs to unfold in the direction of a public theology, and, thus, participate in the sufferings, the joys, the oppressions and the liberation of the people.

–Jürgen Moltmann, 2006⁷³²

The stories narrated in the previous chapter were merely a few examples among many from the Hong Kong protests in the 2010s. Given Hong Kong's reputation as an efficient East Asia financial hub,⁷³³ any democratic movement within it lasting up to ninety days, like the Umbrella Movement, is surprising for most Hong Kongese, including those who participated in the Movement. As if this were not enough, the anti-extradition law protests that began in June 2019 are still ongoing, even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic early in 2020. With Hong Kong society facing an unclear future, public theology has become even more important for engaging theological dialogue in this tumultuous era.

Recapitulation of Post-1997 Public Theology

The previous chapters explored the picture of post-1997 Protestant public theology in Hong Kong, the development of which can be traced back to the social policies established from

⁷³² Jürgen Moltmann, 'A paixão de Cristo: por uma sociedade sem vítimas. Entrevista com Jürgen Moltmann' [Christ's Passion: For a Society without Victims. Interview with Jürgen Moltmann], *Cadernos IHU em formação: Teologia Pública [IHU Notebooks in Formation: Public Theology]*, trans. Eneida Jacobsen, 2:8 (2006), 78; Eneida Jacobsen, 'Models of Public Theology', *International Journal of Public Theology* 6, 1 (2012): 10.

⁷³³ According to a study by J.P. Morgan, this is one of the advantages for financial companies to keep investing in this city. For details, see Greg Clark and Tim Moonen, *Hong Kong: A Globally Fluent Metropolitan City*, Global Cities Initiative, June 2014.

the 1950s onwards. The partnership between the colonial government and churches regarding educational, medical, and social services between 1950 and 1970 set up the foundation of the current relationship between the church and the state in Hong Kong. Against the backdrop of this type of church-state relations, since the 1960s, Hong Kong citizens have had a growing sense of identity as Hong Kongese—an identity formed by differentiating themselves from both their motherland, China, and their coloniser, Great Britain. After almost sixty years, this kind of identity struggle is still observable.

The Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui (HKSKH) became one of the major denominations to speak into and to serve society, one of the three publics in David Tracy's definitions of social reality in public theology.⁷³⁴ Because of its close ties to British missionary societies in the 1950s, it enjoyed a closer relationship with the colonial government, furthering its influence in the political realm. Because of this established relationship, I argued in Chapter 2 that the HKSKH's public theology has been significantly influenced by its interactions with the state. In other words, its public theology has been highly determined by the fact that this group of theologians situated themselves within the polity realm.

During the three years of my PhD research, several Hong Kong Christians have asked me why the HKSKH is included in this project, given that Hong Kong Protestants generally disagree with its public theology. However, I would argue that the HKSKH has a clear sense of theological engagement with their public—the society—although some may perceive it as inward looking. Paul Kwong, the major figure studied in Chapter 2, has taken a stance opposing the Umbrella Movement, but this does not mean that he rejects the idea of doing justice, loving

⁷³⁴ David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (London: SCM Press, 1981), 6–14.

kindness, and walking humbly with God (Micah 6:8).⁷³⁵ As Kwong argued in his 2018 Easter pastoral letter,

[The] justice to which the prophet Micah refers is neither defined by people's preferences, nor created by human intelligence. It is built on God's promise when we made a covenant with Him. God commands us to be faithful to ethical relationships and be responsible, that is, to love, be faithful, and be responsible to God, to others, and to the world....

Resurrected Christians should live their new lives abiding by His teachings. This is a burden the faithful should bear for God, for others, and for the world.⁷³⁶

The justice perceived by Kwong is expressed through means other than the Umbrella Movement: the implementation of social services and the development of a harmonious society.

Scholars in Sino-Christian theology, in contrast, are focused on producing a public theology for their own public, the academy. As illustrated in Chapter 3, due to their main focus on academic discussions, these theologians are perhaps less well-known among lay persons. However, the conversations generated by this group of theologians do complement the other two groups based on their concerns in this public. Unlike Paul Kwong's interpretation of *Zhongyong* (*The Doctrine of the Mean*) influenced by his perspective of *via media*, Lai Pan-chiu stresses an understanding of the world and the interpersonal relationships within it, in light of his ecological interpretation of Confucianism and its input on Christian public theology. Through this kind of understanding, one may determine how one positions oneself in the world.

⁷³⁵ This verse is also discussed in Benny Tai's article on public theology to justify civil disobedience for his Occupy Central with Love and Peace campaign. Benny Tai, 'Gongmin kangming de zuida shashangli wuqi' [The Most Destructive Weapon of Civil Disobedience], *Hong Kong Economic Journal*, 16 January 2013, http://oclp.hk/index.php?route=occupy/article_detail&article_id=23.

⁷³⁶ Paul Kwong, 'The Archbishop's Pastoral Letter for Easter 2018', *Echo*, 29 March 2018.

Another point that builds on Kwong's public theology is Lai's perception of Hong Kong identity. For Lai, being a Christian with Chinese ethnicity or nationality is not equivalent to the love of the Chinese nation. He highlights that, from a Christian perspective, Hong Kong citizens should consider themselves citizens of God's kingdom, not bounded by their nationality. Through his discussion of the Chinese intellectual Xie Fuya, he also puts forward the notion that Christians, especially those who are Hong Kong citizens, should develop an international mindset to accommodate the reality that globalisation will be the general norm in the future. This is well illustrated in the anti-extradition law protests in Hong Kong, with the Hong Kong Christian diaspora showing solidarity with those living in Hong Kong through their generous donations to the protesters⁷³⁷ and supporting them through prayer.⁷³⁸

Kwok Wai-luen, as the main figure studied in Chapter 4, has tackled theological issues that concern the church, the main public of the Hong Kong evangelicals, which encompasses both pastoral leaders and the laity. Following on from the work of Kwong and Lai, Kwok has discussed the rise of Hong Kong identity in the 1970s from a sociological perspective, as well as the church's response to the social and political issues of that era. His examination of a Hong Kong identity shows that public theology cannot be detached from one's context, as theology is developed from the context that shapes one's identity. An individual's continuous struggle can determine one's social actions, as well as one's theological response to the social and political context. Dealing with the past also helps one to reflect upon the present. As Kwok has illustrated,

⁷³⁷ Rowland Manthorpe, 'Hong Kong Protesters Raise £1.5m in a Day to Fund Global Ad Campaign', *Sky News*, 13 August 2019, <https://news.sky.com/story/hong-kong-protesters-raise-1-5m-in-a-day-to-fund-global-ad-campaign-11784689>.

⁷³⁸ Han Yunjing, 'Xianggang jin fadong san ba: Taiwan jiaohui jixu wei Xianggang shouwang; mu zhe lingchang "Sing Hallelujah to the Lord" wei Gang fasheng' [Hong Kong Launches Three Strikes Today: Churches in Taiwan Continue to Support Hong Kong; Pastors Speak out for Hong Kong and Sing "Sing Hallelujah to the Lord"]], *Jidujiao luntan bao* [*The Chinese Christian Tribune*], 5 August 2019, <https://www.ct.org.tw/1346604#ixzz6FGFraNwM>.

the problem of political apathy in evangelical churches existed not only during the Umbrella Movement, but also as far back as the 1970s, when pastoral leaders sincerely thought that their only major duty was to spread the gospel. Kwok raises questions regarding how the church can act collectively as Christ's witnesses through social actions. Due to the limitations of local churches, which may be bound by particular denominational restrictions, Mission Citizens, a social movement organisation (SMO) initiated by Kwok and other Protestant leaders, provides a platform for groups with different social or political concerns to gather together to exchange dialogue. Although it has not employed any Hauerwasian discourse, Mission Citizens' emphasis on strengthening the witness dimension of the church community seems to parallel Hauerwas's ecclesiology. Having carefully chosen the statement of the Lausanne Movement, which is widely accepted by evangelical leaders in Hong Kong, Kwok demonstrated how Hong Kong Christians, as mature citizens in their society, can express social concerns as individuals in church as well as in society. On top of this, Hong Kong Christians should not neglect their own spirituality, which should ideally guide them in continuous reflections both on their lives and on their responses to social and political issues.

Chapter 5 turned to the discourse of the Hong Kong Hauerwasians, a group of scholars perceived by Hong Kong Christians as using Hauerwas's theology to defend their position that the church should be detached from political issues. I have argued in this chapter that the Hong Kong Hauerwasians, Freeman Huen, Vincent Lau, and Andres Tang, are not as Hauerwasian as their opponents assume, and perhaps not as much as they themselves believe. This chapter also discussed the incident of the election of the Chief Executive of Hong Kong's selection committee in 2014, highlighting the debates between the Hong Kong Hauerwasians and the Barthian scholar John Chan and examining why some evangelicals deemed the Hong Kong

Hauerwasians' approach problematic. It also elucidated the Hong Kong Hauerwasians' understanding of Hauerwas, which has developed through their own context based on their Christian convictions.

Chapter 6 discussed Hauerwas's contribution to Hong Kong public theologies, not only through his writings for his own American context, but also through his direct comments to the Umbrella Movement, and his responses to the theologies of K.H. Ting and Wang Mingdao, who are widely read among Hong Kong evangelicals. As highlighted in this chapter, Hauerwas has not disapproved of either Ting or Wang, despite their contrasting theological stances. Hauerwas argued that their theologies were based on their Christian convictions that led them to particular social actions. To Hauerwas, both detachment from and participation in the Three-Self Patriotic Movement can be perceived as witnessing Christ.

Regarding the Umbrella Movement, this chapter clarified the misunderstanding that Hauerwas would disapprove of the Movement due to the Hong Kong Hauerwasians' interpretation of Hauerwas's alternative community. Hauerwas made it clear that nonviolence is not equivalent to not doing anything in a social movement, whether or not nonviolence involves civil disobedience. His emphasis on being there as Christians illustrates the importance of Christian narratives, which may provide alternative imaginaries for Christian protesters and people of other faiths. The examples from professionals (Occupy Central with Love and Peace), lay persons (performers of 'Sing Hallelujah to the Lord'), and pastoral leaders (the Pastoral Leaders' Care Group) can all be viewed as Jesus's testimonies through their understanding of the Christian faith. They are all stories of Christ's disciples who are willing to share in the sufferings of others in Hong Kong society, and who may encourage the lost sheep in the protests to witness God in alternative ways.

Complementing the Three Publics in Hong Kong

As one of the first major studies of the developments of Protestant public theology in Hong Kong, this thesis evaluates some of the significant expressions of public theology that have arisen since 1997, highlighting the flourishing dialogue after the 2014 Umbrella Movement. Given that different groups of theologians have different understandings of church-state relations, this thesis focuses on public theologies from Anglican theologians, scholars in Sino-Christian theology, and evangelical theologians, speaking with their primary publics in mind: society, academy, and church, respectively.

This thesis has explored the different ways in which Hauerwas's Christology and ecclesiology can complement the current dialogue concerning public theology in Hong Kong. The following section will highlight several key themes that are important in Hauerwas's theology and elaborate how exactly these themes can contribute to the theologies espoused by Anglican theologians, scholars in Sino-Christian theology, and evangelical theologians, analysed in Chapters 2–4.

From the perspective of Anglican theologians, one of the advantages of applying Hauerwas's theology is his understanding of Christian testimony in the world. An understanding of this can help shed light on two aspects with which most Hong Kong Protestants struggle, regarding the HKSKH's approach to public theology: (1) its emphasis on harmony, which leads to frequent collaborations with the government and political parties; and (2) the Hong Kong identity.

Although Hauerwas does not engage the concept of harmony in his theology, his notion of peaceableness contributes to Paul Kwong's discussion of harmony because both ideas are

intended to bring forward a theological dialogue that will lead to the betterment of society based on their worldview. For Kwong, the most important factor is the church's ability to interact and co-exist with other religious and political parties that may have different views from the Protestant church, while for Hauerwas, it is to let the church be the church and thus let the Christian community be a witness to the world. Although many people involved in the Protestant church and from the general public may consider the HKSKH to be a traitor to Hong Kong, due to its close partnership with the SAR government and the Communist Party of China, Kwong—Archbishop of the HKSKH—deems it essential to maintain a harmonious relationship with the state. Situating themselves in the political realm, Kwong and the Anglican leaders with whom he works closely appear to genuinely believe that this is a suitable approach for Anglican leaders to take; that is, this approach will bring harmony to a dichotomised society. In this way, Kwong's motif and conviction are similar to those of K. H. Ting in terms of building a relationship with a government with different religiophilosophical beliefs. Hauerwas would probably approve of Kwong's motif, just as he approved of Ting's, because both seek to witness God through the church's relationship with the state.⁷³⁹ In light of a popular slogan in the present-day anti-extradition law protests—'Don't exclude others; don't differentiate others' (*bu gexi; bu duhui*)—if Protestants consider the HKSKH to be following the wrong approach to handling the church-state relationship, can Hauerwas's interpretation of Ting enlighten the discussion of Hauerwas's view of the relationship between the church and the world? For example, Ting's idea that the church should continue to interact with the world and that one must be truthful to Jesus's testimony could mean that churches can be the first societal institutions to testify their belief to

⁷³⁹ Stanley Hauerwas, 'Zai Yazhou de jiaohui—yizhong Bate shi de mo xiang' [The Church in Asia: A Barthian Meditation], tran. Chiu Man-kuan, *Jian Dao* 51 (2019): 158–159.

the world and not exclude others, rather than condemning others for their different theological approaches.

In the same way, it is unnecessary to place one's identity over another's in order to show the authenticity of a particular group. As argued by Paul Kwong and Timothy Kwok, it is undeniable that the citizens of Hong Kong face the dilemma of a continuously shifting identity due to Hong Kong's status as a former British colony and now as a Chinese SAR. Hauerwas's approach is helpful in that his ultimate goal is to reinterpret Jesus's story in the Gospels, the story of how he brought light to the world in the midst of conflict and chaos. One's Christian identity should be a constant variable that no one will deny, and this gives rise to a challenge for many Protestant theologians concerning how one can continue to construct Jesus's narrative to the world in a way that lets the world see the light, despite a gloomy societal atmosphere and a continually shifting identity.

For scholars in Sino-Christian theology, Hauerwas raises questions with regard to its respective public, the academy; not only does he further define the relationship between universities and the church, but he also responds to some challenges proposed by evangelicals about the role of Christian academics. According to Hauerwas:

It is not that theology found its way into the university, but universities, particularly the universities at Paris and Oxford, were constituted by theologians at work.... [The] central role of theology [at universities] was never questioned.... I think the church needs theologians because she cannot hide from herself that she believes the one that moves the sun and the stars is to be found in the person of a first-century Jew named Jesus.... And

thought has to take place somewhere. For centuries monasticism was a good home for theology, but then along came the university.⁷⁴⁰

Hauerwas's comments relieve the criticism raised by Hong Kong evangelicals about the Christian convictions of those situated in academia. There is a misconception that theology is not done in the academy because universities in Hong Kong never experienced the pre-Enlightenment period in Europe, when theology was one of the main areas of interest at universities, where clergies were trained before they went to serve in churches.⁷⁴¹ In contrast, the modern notion of the university's role treats theology as one subject to be studied in parallel with other secular humanities subjects, while in some public universities, theology has been replaced by religious studies.⁷⁴² Theology has in some senses lost its ecclesial discipline, both in Hauerwas's American context and in the Hong Kong context, although the first two universities in Hong Kong that offered this subject were founded by Protestant organisations to train pastoral leaders.⁷⁴³ This being so, it is a false assumption that since theology is taught in academia, it does not serve the church; when the first universities were established in Europe, they very much did serve the church. For Hauerwas, it seems to be this sort of disconnectedness between academia and the church that has to be adjusted.

Although universities in Hong Kong did not experience the pre-Enlightenment period, nor the changes in universities that occurred during the Enlightenment, the discussion here—as well as in Hauerwas's writings—concerns how theology can be brought back to the church in a way

⁷⁴⁰ Stanley Hauerwas and Robert J. Dean, *Minding the Web: Making Theological Connections* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2018), 77.

⁷⁴¹ Note that Chung Chi College, CUHK, was first established as a Christian institute of higher education in 1951, and was not incorporated into the university until 1963. 'Brief History', Chung Chi College, accessed 7 December 2019, <http://www.ccc.cuhk.edu.hk/en-gb/about-chung-chi/introduction/aims-and-brief-history>.

⁷⁴² On the development of theology as a subject in the university, see Zachary Purvis, *Theology and the University in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 228–230.

⁷⁴³ As indicated in Chapter 3, these two universities are Chung Chi College, CUHK, and the Hong Kong Baptist University.

that assists the church, so it is not merely treated as a humanistic subject that serves the university. Challenging Huen's notion that theology should only be performed in churches—that is, by pastoral leaders or church theologians for the benefit of the church congregation⁷⁴⁴—I believe that the academy, as another public, can be useful; while separate from the church, academic theologians can assist in producing public theology.⁷⁴⁵ The division of labour between academy and church does not have to entirely disconnect one from the other; each public has its own strengths and thus produces theologies from its own perspective. If a Hong Kong public theology is to be constructed, it should encompass the theologies of all three publics in Hong Kong. Hauerwas, being a theologian active in both the church and the academy, helps to bring these two publics together.

In response to the criticism of theologians in academia, Hauerwas states in his sermon 'Repentance: A Lenten Meditation' that the problems he encounters include his struggle as a theologian with his Christian belief, and the challenge from others that academic theologians may not be Christians of conviction because they are 'paid to believe in God'.⁷⁴⁶ Hauerwas writes that this criticism derives from the impression that most academic theologians are servants of the university instead of the church, as a result of which church-based theologians wonder whether academic theologians are true Christians. In his defence of academic theologians, Hauerwas highlights the fact that contemporary universities encourage them to treat theology objectively and thereby maintain distance from their subjective selves, which may give the

⁷⁴⁴ It is noteworthy that, despite Huen's background of having completed two philosophical degrees and his frequent use of philosophical methodology to argue for Hauerwas's Christian ethics, he states that theology as a discipline has abandoned the purpose of constructing itself for the church. Moreover, since Huen is situated in a seminary, this implies that he sees the seminary as part of the church, and not as part of the academy. See Freeman Huen, *Shehui lunli: Du xie Houhuoshi* [Title in English on colophon: *Writing with Hauerwas: Essays on Social Ethic*] (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers, 2017), 84.

⁷⁴⁵ Note that this is also the point argued by Forrester. For details, see Duncan B. Forrester, 'The Scope of Public Theology', *Studies in Christian Ethics* 17, 2 (2004):5–19.

⁷⁴⁶ Hauerwas and Dean, *Minding the Web*, 210–214.

impression that they are pretending to be Christians.⁷⁴⁷ Hauerwas also comments that the matter of whether or not academic theologians are Christians does not depend on other people's doubt; instead, it depends on God, who has the grace and compassion to turn them into what they pretend to be—that is, Christians.⁷⁴⁸ This may also ease scepticism about the public theologies that academic theologians produce, offering an alternative to the criticism that they are not leading an authentic Christian life, in contrast to pastoral leaders in the church. Hauerwas's Christocentric view emphasises the power of Jesus Christ to heal and forgive sins, regardless of how Christians may perceive their sins—whether or not their sin is their pretentiousness (of being exemplary Christians) or ignorance (of their sins). Christ first comes to sinners to show his love and compassion, before Christians know what sins they have committed.⁷⁴⁹ This being so, the task of interpreting a public theology should not focus on one's sins, given the assumption that we all are sinners and that it is only Christ who can judge us.

With regard to Kwok Wai-luen's comment that there is a temptation for congregations to leave the duty of testifying for God to their pastoral leaders, Hauerwas's theology may remind the churches that a Christian witness should be embodied by the whole church. As rightly stated by William Storrar, Director of the Center of Theological Inquiry at Princeton Theological Seminary, Hauerwas and William Willimon in *Resident Aliens* suggest that 'theology must be rooted in the common life and the public witness of the local church. Public theologians need to learn from congregational pastors and members as they seek to be faithful witnesses to Jesus Christ in their communities; but public theology must also be rooted in the academy, whether in

⁷⁴⁷ Hauerwas and Dean, *Minding the Web*, 210–211.

⁷⁴⁸ Hauerwas and Dean, *Minding the Web*, 214.

⁷⁴⁹ Hauerwas and Dean, *Minding the Web*, 212–213.

a university, [community] college or seminary setting.⁷⁵⁰ The testimony should be a communal exercise that shows the world how Christians are different, and public theology should be built by both pastoral leaders and lay persons, as well as academic theologians who are committed to Christ. Hauerwas's ecclesiology helps to transcend the Christian witness from individual matters to the collective experiences of the church community.

Another contribution of Hauerwas's emphasis on biblical narrative is that it brings back Christians, whether they be lay persons or academics, back to the narrative of Jesus. As observed by Sam Tsang, Associate Professor of New Testament at the HKBTS, among Hong Kong Protestants, the debates on biblical hermeneutics in relation to liberation theology have largely been restricted to the classification of liberal and conservative theology, which may fail to account for the complexity of the issues and overlook the problem itself.⁷⁵¹ While people who otherwise espouse different political stances may argue about interpretations of the Bible, the focus should perhaps be shifted to the extent to which Jesus offers a helping hand to those in an inferior position in society, which would direct attention to the protesters in Hong Kong who consider themselves powerless in the face of a powerful and undemocratic regime.

Hauerwas's emphasis on narrative serves to broaden the discourse of public theology, which has been built on the foundation of natural law ethic by Max Stackhouse (1935–2016), a reformed theologian and Director of Abraham Kuyper Center for Public Theology.⁷⁵² Hauerwas

⁷⁵⁰ William Storrar, '2007: A Kairos Moment for Public Theology', *International Journal of Public Theology* 1, 1 (2007): 8–9; Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1989), 12.

⁷⁵¹ Sam Tsang, 'Exegeting the Occupation of Hong Kong: The Umbrella Movement as a Battleground for Liberation Hermeneutics', in *Theological Reflections on the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement: Asian Christianity in the Diaspora*, ed. Justin K.H. Tse and Jonathan Y. Tan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 150–151.

⁷⁵² For example, Stackhouse believed that '[society] ... reflects the natural ordering of things as given through God's creative action in the world'. See Deirdre King Hainsworth and Scott R. Paeth, 'Introduction' in *Public Theology for a Global Society: Essays in Honor of Max L. Stackhouse* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2010), 10.

does not believe that ‘a natural law ethic in and of itself has the “possibility of overcoming moral diversity and especially disagreement by means other than manipulation force, or compromise.” Such an understanding of natural law, [he fears,] divorces it from the theological claims—and in particular the ecclesial context—necessary for the articulation of the natural law.’⁷⁵³ This is especially important, in light of the imperfect laws that apply to and are applied by imperfect human beings: How do Hong Kongese make sense of the anti-mask law imposed by the SAR government in 2019,⁷⁵⁴ when the law is doing nothing to improve the further dichotomy splitting Hong Kong society? As Duncan B. Forrester criticised the use of natural law by Luther and Calvin, human beings as well as the world were in a fallen state, so Christians should not expect the nature to be in a whole order and consider the law of nature to be the same as the law of God.⁷⁵⁵ Human nature is imperfect, as are the laws created by humans. Forrester’s argument helps to diminish the expectation that when the human laws and humans themselves fail, divine law and the justice that accompanies that law will disappoint Christ’s followers, given that the laws in place in Hong Kong were not necessarily drafted by Christians in the first place. This being so, Christian narratives become essential to ‘make the world the world’.⁷⁵⁶

To be a witness for Christ does not come without its costs. In the statement of Mission Citizens, Kwok asserts that testimony requires sacrifice. A similar dialogue can be found in

⁷⁵³ Hauerwas, *War and the American Difference*, 149–150. On Hauerwas’s disagreement with the use of natural law in theological ethics, see also Stanley Hauerwas, ‘Natural Law, Tragedy, and Theological Ethics’, *The American Journal of Jurisprudence* 20, 1 (1975): 1–19; Joseph Boyle, ‘Natural Law and Global Ethics’, in *Natural Law and the Possibility of a Global Ethics*, ed. Mark J. Cherry (New York: Kluwer Academic Publishers), 1–15.

⁷⁵⁴ In short, the anti-mask law was implemented based on an emergency law last used in 1967 by the British colonial government in order to be able to easily identify protesters and arrest them. For details, see Ilaria Maria Sala, ‘Hong Kong Is Turning to a 1922 Law that Was Used to Quell a Seamen’s Strike to Ban Face Masks’, *Quartz*, 4 October 2019, <https://qz.com/1721951/anti-mask-law-the-1922-origins-of-hong-kongs-emergency-powers/>; Kris Cheng, ‘Hong Kong Officially Enacts Emergency Laws to Ban Masks at Protests as NGOs Criticise “Draconian” Measure’, *Hong Kong Free Press*, 4 October 2019, <https://www.hongkongfp.com/2019/10/04/breaking-hong-kong-officially-enacts-emergency-laws-ban-masks-protests-ngos-criticise-draconian-measure/>.

⁷⁵⁵ Duncan B. Forrester, *Forrester on Christian Ethics and Practical Theology: Collected Writings on Christianity, India, and the Social Order* (London: Routledge, 2017), 329–330.

⁷⁵⁶ Hauerwas, *War and the American Difference*, 150.

Hauerwas's Christian ethics, where he observes that one of the criteria of being Christ's witness should be a willingness to suffer. One of the paths that Hauerwas suggests Christians should follow is embracing a willingness to live out of control—to accept that a situation may not be as good as we have hoped or prayed for, but to have faith nevertheless that God is in control, in the midst of our suffering.⁷⁵⁷ This is very important in a struggle against a totalitarian regime, where Christian ideology does not affect the government's direction.

Although my analysis has focused on social movements in Hong Kong, Hauerwas's theology can extend dialogues beyond the mere discussions of political participation. In 1999, Kung Lap-yan wrote a chapter in which he discussed how Hauerwas's ecclesiology could fit into the Hong Kong context, which is still relevant to the political atmosphere today.⁷⁵⁸ Kung rightly states that Hauerwas does not simply argue for or against political involvement; instead, Hauerwas suggests that the church should be a new polis that is concerned with politics. For Kung, the theological politics that Hauerwas proposes are based on his ecclesiology, which is that the church should be a starting point for the construction of theological dialogue as a testimony to the world.⁷⁵⁹ This approach could advance the conversation pursued by the evangelical theologians discussed in Chapter 4, since most of their discussions are still bound by the frequency of political involvement. Hauerwas's imagination helps to extend the dialogue beyond debating whether one should be for or against political engagement; in spite of the different political beliefs of Hong Kongese, they can still testify to God through their narratives. Moreover, despite Kung's approval of Hauerwas's ecclesiology as well as the communal witness

⁷⁵⁷ Hauerwas, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, 135–141.

⁷⁵⁸ Note that Kung's PhD dissertation, completed at the University of Glasgow, was on Hauerwas and liberation theologian John Sobrino. See Kung Lap-yan, 'Christian Discipleship Today', PhD diss., University of Glasgow, 1994.

⁷⁵⁹ Kung Lap-yan, 'Houhuoshi de shenxue zhengzhi yu Xianggang' [Hauerwas's Theological Politics and Hong Kong], in *Kebu, Pannengbo, Houhuoshi yu dangdai huaren chujing* [Cobb, Pannenberg, Hauerwas and Contemporary Chinese Context] (Hong Kong: Lutheran Theological Seminary, 1999), 97.

of Christians,⁷⁶⁰ I suspect that Kung would never consider his theology aligned with the Hong Kong Hauerwasians, not just because of his heavy use of liberation theology in his analysis of Hong Kong public theology⁷⁶¹ but also as a result of his greater willingness to find common ground with others in the public sphere, compared to Hong Kong Hauerwasians, and perhaps Hauerwas himself. Nonetheless, contrary to the assumption that Hong Kong theologians only engaged with Hauerwas's theology in the 2010s, it is important to mention that the discourse on Hauerwas's theology in Hong Kong had already started by the late 1990s.

The participants of public sphere in Hong Kong is probably much more diverse than the sphere Habermas constructed because the latter is based within the purported context of a public sphere usually comprising upper-middle-class males who had the privilege to read and learn, but this is certainly not the case in Hong Kong, where most of its citizens, no matter their social class, are sufficiently literate to read theological texts and understand them well enough to join in the theological debate. An authentic public theology should allow people to learn from each other, regardless of their gender, political beliefs, or educational, and religious backgrounds. Despite the fact that an ideal speech situation—that is, a condition Habermas highlights as one of the major conditions in the public sphere—is yet to be developed in the Hong Kong context, from the Christian perspective, this can perhaps start with a nonviolent approach to language, by not using words that may humiliate others out of the urge to win an argument. This will need to

⁷⁶⁰ See Ho's notes on Kung's lecture: Ho Siu-pan, *Shen piao: Bendi shenxue zhaji 10 tang ke* [My Journey to God: Theological Reflections of 10 Local Lectures] (Hong Kong: VW Link, 2016).

⁷⁶¹ For example, see Kung Lap-yan, 'Shouhaizhe keyi xuanze yibaoyibao ma? Dui Saerduo renmin weixian huiyi de shenxue fanxing' [Can Victims Repay Evil for Evil? A Theological Reflection on the Dangerous Memories of Salvadorans], in *Fei baoli shi'er wen* [Twelve Questions on Nonviolence], ed. Andres Tang (Hong Kong: Logos Publishers, 2017), 186–213; Kung Lap-yan, 'The Umbrella Movement and Kairos: The Church's Theological Encounter with a Political Movement', in *Theological Reflections on the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement: Asian Christianity in the Diaspora*, ed. Justin K.H. Tse and Jonathan Y. Tan (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), 107–130.

be learnt by all of Hong Kong society, where people tend to believe in authority and ignore other voices.

Furthermore, it should be clarified that although there are three publics in Hong Kong public theology, they are not wholly separate entities; there are overlapping areas. There are no clear boundaries between these three publics, but rather porous ones, to borrow the concept put forward by Charles Taylor (b. 1931) in *A Secular Age* to describe a category disengaged from everything outside.⁷⁶² Although it is not my intention to elaborate on the concept of secularisation in Taylor's work, which would require another thesis to chart in full, the methodology with which Taylor defines boundaries in different categories is helpful in acknowledging that a boundary is not as clear-cut or solid as one might assume. Moreover, a porous boundary suggests that one may be continuously influenced by one's environment, and I regard this approach as necessary for this project due to the exchange of information and discourses between the three publics.⁷⁶³

⁷⁶² Another noteworthy point is that Taylor develops this theory on individuals rather than communities. However, for the purpose of this thesis, it will be more useful to consider the boundaries between communities, since Hong Kong is a relatively communal society, as argued in the previous section. For a detailed discussion of the porous and solid boundaries, which Taylor terms 'buffered'. As stated previously, since Hong Kong did not go through the European Enlightenment, Taylor's notion of a buffered boundary is perhaps not relevant, since it mainly concerns the discourses of modernity and secularisation. See his comparison of the porous self and the buffered self in Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007), 37–41.

⁷⁶³ Despite using David Tracy's categorisation of the three publics, I do not endorse his terms 'diffuse' or 'would-be' for the nature of these categories, since both imply a lack of a clear sense of disciplinary direction. Rather, the three publics I suggest in this thesis—society, academy, and church—all have specific goals for and with the people who interact with the different publics; as a result, I prefer Taylor's term 'buffered'. To investigate Tracy's thought in more detail, see Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination*, 17–20.

Future Prospects of Hong Kong Public Theology

Hauerwas's Theology in the Hong Kong Context

This thesis has attempted to suggest the extent of Hauerwas's potential contribution to Hong Kong public theology in a way distinct from the theology of the Hong Kong Hauerwasians. In light of the growing prevalence of misinformation on the anti-extradition law protests, as well as the violence generated by protesters holding different political views, I hope my readers, at least those concerned about Hong Kong, find Hauerwas's theology appealing and translatable in this increasingly dichotomised society. Some may disregard Hauerwas's notion of nonviolence due to the increasing support of the valiant (*yongwu pai*) in the anti-extradition law protests, who consider a minimum amount of violence in the protests to be essential to fulfil their goals. As discussed in Chapter 6, the main focus of Hauerwas's notion of nonviolence is on the ability to create alternative imaginaries: when one does not have to use violence, one would choose not to use it. Following this logic, I would argue that it is of high importance that a Christian narrative can be developed in this world full of misinformation, so that Hong Kong citizens, whether they are Christians or not, can see the difference within the stories illustrated through the storied people, and thus may further develop these stories because of the Christians' testimony. Although Hauerwas develops his theology from his American context, the translatability of his theology—based on one's stories in Christ—is evident through the discussions of the Hong Kong protests in the previous chapters.

Public Theology in Digital Media: Extending into the Technoeconomic Realm

Another area worth exploring is the presence of a Hong Kong public theology in digital media. As shown in the previous section, I have discussed the minimal contribution of public theology to the technoeconomic realm by Anglican theologians. Since public theology has been developed through digital media in recent times, especially during the Umbrella Movement and the anti-extradition protests, it is foreseeable that in the future, digital media will become a platform for the further construction of public theology. One may even argue, given Tracy's emphasis on Max Weber's instrumental rationality within the technoeconomic realm, that there will be a shift of instrumental rationality to value rationality in this realm in the future. Although Hong Kongese have unquestionably found digital media instrumental in terms of achieving their goals and have thus chosen this platform as a means for elaborating on their moral ideals, value rationality seems to play a significant role in these kinds of activities to fulfil their mission.⁷⁶⁴ Theological engagement via digital media will be one of the major areas to be investigated if and when the protests come to an end in the future.

In the past, perhaps even just before the anti-extradition law protests, people may have wondered how Hong Kong public theology would matter to them, whether they were East Asian scholars or from the Global North. However, due to the global impact of the protests promoted by digital media, most people can no longer deny the significance of Hong Kong and how it will shape public theology in the future. For example, the 2019 Catalan pro-independence protests in Barcelona, Spain, have made similar demands of the Spanish government, with some protesters

⁷⁶⁴ For Weber's typology of instrumental rationality and value rationality, see Stephen Kalberg, 'Max Weber's Types of Rationality: Cornerstones for the Analysis of Rationalization Processes in History', *The American Journal of Sociology* 85, 5 (March 1980): 1145–1179.

acknowledging that the 2019 Hong Kong protests had inspired them to defend democracy.⁷⁶⁵ In the 1990s, when Max Stackhouse developed his public theology within discussions of globalisation, perhaps he had not imagined that public theology could be transmitted globally through digital media in an almost instantaneous manner. I would argue that the exchange of dialogue in terms of public theology will become more frequent through digital media in the future, be it from the Hong Kong diaspora or from any public theologians interested in the development of Hong Kong protests.

Moreover, the cultural realm seems to be underexplored in Hong Kong public theology. Members of the HKSKH, especially those worshipping in cathedrals, are undoubtedly familiar with the usage of icons, as highlighted by the realm of culture. I wonder, however, if symbolic exchange is the main way for them to express their public theologies. Regarding the technoeconomic and cultural realms, I would suggest that digital media could be a platform from which the public theologies could be further developed. As the digital religion scholar Heidi Campbell argues, the fluidity of online environments allows the empowerment of those who do not usually have authority in the traditional hierarchy. Online environment may facilitate silenced groups who can express their voice in this new platform.⁷⁶⁶ Just as the protesters against extradition laws created unique forms of art to express their political concerns to the world, perhaps public theology can be similarly expressed.⁷⁶⁷ This will be an area to explore when the anti-extradition law protests come to an end.

⁷⁶⁵ Stuart Lai, 'Hong Kong and Catalonia: Protest Movements Contrasting in Style but Similarly Bound', *South China Morning Post*, 7 November 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/news/china/diplomacy/article/3036771/hong-kong-and-catalonia-protest-movements-contrasting-style>.

⁷⁶⁶ Heidi Campbell, 'Understanding the Relationship between Religion Online and Offline in a Networked Society', *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 80, 1 (March 2012): 74–76.

⁷⁶⁷ Kate Whitehead, 'Extradition Bill Art: The Hong Kong Artists Painting a Picture of Protests for the World', *South China Morning Post*, 18 July 2019, <https://www.scmp.com/lifestyle/arts-culture/article/3018925/extradition-bill-art-hong-kong-artists-painting-picture>.

Expanding Hong Kong Public Theology: A Few Suggestions

As this thesis has focused on Protestant public theology, one limitation is that Catholic public theology, or social theology, has not been explored. Several key figures and organisations of Hong Kong Catholicism, such as Cardinal Joseph Zen (b. 1932), the current Auxiliary Bishop of Hong Kong Joseph Ha (b. 1959),⁷⁶⁸ and the Yellow Umbrella Christian Grassroots Organisation (*huang san jietou jidutu jiceng tuanti*),⁷⁶⁹ are instrumental in developing a Catholic public discourse, especially in the anti-extradition law protests. Investigating their theology will help to expand Hong Kong public theology from a Catholic perspective. However, as described in the previous chapters, it is evident that several theologians investigated in this thesis have been influenced by aspects of Catholic public theology, such as Jason Lam's engagement with David Tracy's work, Hauerwas's ecclesiology shaped by Catholicism due to his prolonged teaching at the University of Notre Dame and Emmanuel Katongole's interpretation of Hauerwas's narrative theology through the Christian stories in the Congo. A major study dedicated solely to Catholic social theology would be a significant contribution to the field.

Furthermore, an eagle-eyed reader may notice the lack of gender balance in this thesis. While, as a female theologian myself, I hope to see more articles of public theology articles written by women, it is still crucial to gather materials on public theology, a new academic field in Hong Kong. As I work toward developing this thesis into a monograph, I will seek to include additional Hong Kong female voices in public theology.

⁷⁶⁸ 'Rev. Joseph HA Chi-shing, Auxiliary Bishop', Catholic Diocese of Hong Kong, accessed 17 April 2020, <https://bit.ly/2XFnCj3>.

⁷⁶⁹ Note that their official English name on Facebook is *Yellow Umbrella Christian Base Community* which, technically, is slightly different from the Chinese name. Yellow Umbrella Christian Grassroots Organisation, Facebook, accessed 17 April 2020, <https://bit.ly/2RJNZ3B>.

While I have attempted to include the conversation of public theology regarding the anti-extradition law protests, the protests are still ongoing, so more is undoubtedly bound to be said. As surveillance has been a main concern for protesters regarding the extradition laws, one of the aspects worth developing is the theological understanding of surveillance, in relation to the governmental practice of collecting online data, as well as installing facial recognition street lamps outside government-owned buildings.⁷⁷⁰ In the future, when the anti-extradition law protests have come to an end, as we all hope they will, perhaps we can see the development of new forms of public theology mindful of these events.

Hong Kong Public Theology beyond Hong Kong

Echoing Forrester's argument that all public theology is contextual, this thesis has highlighted the particularity of public theology in post-1997 Hong Kong. The research has drawn upon resources from Hong Kong theologians to offer a public theology from their context. As Kung Lap-yan has argued, public theology has existed in Hong Kong for a number of years, through the dialogue between theologians and professionals in other areas.⁷⁷¹ However, it is also true that the term 'public theology', as observed by Chan Hoi-man, a column writer for the Christian new media *Faith 100*, tends to reflect the scenarios in the West without fully engaging with the Hong Kong situation.⁷⁷² For this reason, this thesis underscores some key events that may shape the dialogue of public theology. As the influence of Hong Kong's public events

⁷⁷⁰ Sidney Fussell, 'Why Hong Kongers Are Toppling Lampposts', *The Atlantic*, 30 August 2019, <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2019/08/why-hong-kong-protesters-are-cutting-down-lampposts/597145/>.

⁷⁷¹ Kung Lap-yan, 'Zai gonggong de gonggong shenxue' [Public Theology in the Public], *Shidai luntan* [Christian Times], 30 November 2011, https://christiantimes.org.hk/Common/Reader/News/ShowNews.jsp?Nid=69799&Pid=2&Version=1266&Cid=714&Charset=big5_hkscs.

⁷⁷² Chan Hon-ming, 'Ruguo suoyou shenxue dou shi gonggong shenxue.....' [If All Theology Is Public Theology.....], *Faith 100*, 28 October 2018, <https://bit.ly/2UwYJCW>.

increases globally, due to the widespread campaign of the anti-extradition law protests, perhaps future scholars in the Global North will draw upon resources from Hong Kong and advance their public theologies from Hong Kong's experience.

Undoubtedly, due to the particular problems in Hong Kong society, each group studied in this thesis intends to tackle the issues theologically with regard to its public. Some may question why this type of public theology should matter to the Global North. Moreover, one might ask why academics in the United Kingdom would need to read this PhD thesis. The simple answer is that, in a globally connected world, social and political problems in a local context are not as isolated as one may think. Due to the instant transmission of information and the high mobility of individuals, even in comparison to the previous century, a local problem is capable of becoming a global problem—not only something like the current COVID-19 crisis, but also hatred and discrimination. For example, a Mainland Chinese student at the University of Edinburgh received death threats online for participating in the anti-extradition law protests in Edinburgh, with his bullies making requests for people from his hometown, Qingdao, to beat him to death.⁷⁷³ It has become a reality that the anti-extradition law protests are international events, not only through media coverage by major newspapers in the West, but also through their impact within the West.⁷⁷⁴ Members of the Hong Kong diaspora have become important players in terms of their influence in the West as well as back in their hometown of Hong Kong.

⁷⁷³ Tom Ball and Mark McLaughlin, 'Death Threats Sent to Hongkongers Studying in Britain', *The Times*, 26 November 2019, <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/death-threats-sent-to-hongkongers-studying-in-britain-wxhmg1bct>.

⁷⁷⁴ For example, in November 2019, US President Donald Trump has signed the Human Rights and Democracy Act to protect the pro-democracy protesters in Hong Kong, which was interpreted as a trade war between the United States and China. For details, see Ng Lok, 'Xianggang renquan fa: Telangpu zao xie hao "xin lengzhan" juben. Bu hui zunao fa'an shishi' [The Hong Kong Human Rights and Democracy Act: Trump Has Already Written the Scripts of the 'New Cold-War'. It Does Not Prohibit the Implementation of the Act], *Hong Kong Economic Times*, 21 November 2019, <https://bit.ly/3eCQQ86>.

On a more regional scale, the public theology of Hong Kong is clearly interlinked with that of Taiwan and of Mainland China. While at an academic conference, a Taiwanese social activist came up to me and told me how fascinated he was by the active involvement of Christians in the Umbrella Movement, as well as by how Christians in Taiwan have been learning from their brothers and sisters in Hong Kong. However, Hong Kong citizens are also continually shaping their identity through their observations of Taiwan's political development. Statistically, there was growing support for Taiwan's independence in the second half of 2019, right after the start of the anti-extradition law protests, and 63 per cent of Hong Kong interviewees considered 'one country, two systems' to have few prospects in Taiwan. The percentages for both opinions have now hit a historically high record.⁷⁷⁵ The rise of local identity in both Hong Kong and Taiwan and its influence on others as shown in these figures illustrates that Hong Kong public theology can have an impact on Taiwanese public theology, due to the emphasis on identity in both regions.

Furthermore, Hong Kong public theology is increasingly more translatable to the situation in Mainland China, due to the increasing interdependence of political decisions between it and Hong Kong. Although the extradition laws have not been implemented in Hong Kong, it can be observed that the political practices in Mainland China are subsequently adapted in Hong Kong (for example, the harassment of those who may be seen as a threat to the national security).⁷⁷⁶ A question arises as to whether the church and state model will change in the future—from what Beatrice Leung and Chan Shun-hing have called a traditional model to the communist country

⁷⁷⁵ Li Xueli, '26 nian min diao qushi: Taiwan yu Xianggang, ruhe cong pingxing xian zouxiang mingyun tongmeng?' [26-Year Polling Trend: How Can Taiwan and Hong Kong Move from a Parallel Line to Become an Alliance in Fate?], *Baodao zhe* [The Reporter], 17 January 2020, <https://www.twreporter.org/a/hong-kong-extradition-law-taiwan-and-hong-kong-alliance>.

⁷⁷⁶ See the case of the detainment of Simon Cheng, a former UK consulate worker in Hong Kong: John Sudworth, 'Simon Cheng: Former UK Consulate Worker Says He Was Tortured in China', *BBC News*, 20 November 2019, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-china-50457262>.

model.⁷⁷⁷ Though this appears to be somewhat pessimistic, a trend for this shift can be observed, at least in 2020. In light of the new appointment of Xia Baolong as Director of the Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office in February 2020,⁷⁷⁸ the fear of religious oppression for Hong Kong churches is evident, both within the church communities and in foreign media. The American pro-democracy outlet *Time* covered the appointment with the title ‘China’s New Hong Kong Affairs Director Used to Rip Crosses from Churches’.⁷⁷⁹ Although it is still too early to say with certainty that Hong Kong churches will face oppression, it is likely that theologians and pastoral leaders will have a tougher time in the future, especially after harassment in the midst of the anti-extradition law protests and the imposition of the national security law.⁷⁸⁰ I also perceive this to be part of the reason why Hauerwas observed that his theology is more thoroughly read outside the United States because, at least in East Asian societies, Christians have never been the majority of the population.⁷⁸¹ Thus, their witness, when compared with non-Christians in these societies, becomes more distinctive than that in the United States.

Reading through Moltmann’s quote on suffering and joy at the beginning of this conclusion, we can acknowledge that these kinds of feelings and experiences can undoubtedly be universal for all human beings, but the contexts triggering the events that provoke these feelings

⁷⁷⁷ Beatrice Leung and Chan Shun-hing, *Changing Church and State Relations in Hong Kong, 1950–2000* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2003), 14–16.

⁷⁷⁸ Reuters, ‘China Replaces Head of Its Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office’, 13 February 2020, <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-china-hongkong/china-replaces-head-of-its-hong-kong-and-macau-affairs-office-idUKKBN2070CX>.

⁷⁷⁹ Karen Leigh and Iain Marlow, ‘China’s New Hong Kong Affairs Director Used to Rip Crosses from Churches’, *Time*, 13 February 2020, <https://time.com/5783509/hong-kong-affairs-office-churches-crosses/>. For the background of the removal of crosses in China, especially in Zhejiang, see Mark McLeister, ‘Chinese Protestant Reactions to the Zhejiang “Three Rectifications, One Demolition” Campaign’, *Review of Religion and Chinese Society* 5 (2018): 76–100.

⁷⁸⁰ Chan Ying-yan and Mak Ka-yan, ‘Yu sishi jiao mu shou konghe duan xun yu bu jiu zhengshi fasheng: Gongkai shijian wang gongzhong guanzhu’ [More than Forty Pastors Received Threatening Messages to Request not to Speak out about Political Affairs: Publicise the Incidents to Seek the Public Concern], *Shidai luntan* [Christian Times], 22 November 2019, <https://bit.ly/39A60aM>.

⁷⁸¹ For details, see Hauerwas’s foreword for Freeman Huen’s monograph: Huen, *Shehui lunli*, xi.

and experiences can be diverse.⁷⁸² The task of public theology is to be responsive to these issues, helping both Christians and non-Christians to understand their world theologically. This thesis is merely one of many attempting to deconstruct the theological phenomenon in this broken world, with the hope of mending it, through Jesus's commandments and through Hong Kong Christian communities.

⁷⁸² For the distinction between the universal model and the contextual model of public theology, see Jacobsen, 'Models of Public Theology', 11–12.

CHINESE-ENGLISH GLOSSARY

The table below is a glossary of major Chinese terms and names used in this thesis with their common English renderings. They are listed in alphabetical order based on Pinyin with alternative renderings in brackets. The Chinese characters are all in the traditional Chinese systems.

Phonetic Rendering	Chinese Characters	English Rendering
Cao Rongjin	曹榮錦	Alexander Chow
Cao Weitung	曹偉彤	Joshua Cho (Cho Wai-ying)
Ceng Sihan	曾思瀚	Sam Tsang (Tsang Sze-hon)
Chen Zemin	陳澤民	Chen Zemin (1917–2018)
Chen Wei'an	陳韋安	John Chan (Chan Wai-on)
Dai Yaoting	戴耀廷	Benny Tai (Tai Yiu-ting)
Deng Xiaoping	鄧小平	Deng Xiaoping (1904–1997)
Deng Shaoguang	鄧紹光	Andres Tang (Tang Siu-kwong)
Ding Guangxun (Ting Kuang-hsun)	丁光訓	K.H. Ting (1915–2012)
Gangshi Hou pai	港式候派	Hong Kong Hauerwasians
Gong Liren	龔立人	Kung Lap-yan
Guan Ruiwen	關瑞文	Simon Kwan (Kwan Shui-man)
Hanyu shenxue/ Hanyu jidu shenxue	漢語神學/漢語基督神學	Sino-theology/ Sino-Christian theology
He Guanghu	何光滬	He Guanghu
Hexie shehui	和諧社會	Harmonious society
Jidujiao xuandao hui	基督教宣道會	Christian and Missionary Alliance
Jidutu Xianggang shouwang she	基督徒香港守望社	Christian Sentinels for Hong Kong
Kuan Kualun	寬夸倫	Hans J. von Qualen

Kuang Baoluo	鄭保羅	Paul Kwong (b. 1950; Kwong Po-lo)
Kuang Guangjie	鄭廣傑	Peter Kwong (b. 1936; Kwong Kong-kit)
Lai Pinchao	賴品超	Lai Pan-chiu
Lin Zichun	林子淳	Jason Lam (Lam Tsz-shun)
Liu Xiaofeng	劉小楓	Liu Xiaofeng (b. 1956)
Liu Zhanpeng	劉展鵬	Vincent Lau (Lau Chin-pang)
Mei rui dan hui	美瑞丹會	Swedish American Mission
Ming Hua	明華	<i>Ming Hua</i>
San zong	三宗	The three [evangelical] denominations
Shao Zhangping	邵樟平	Siu Cheng-ping
Shijie Hua fu zhongxin	世界華福中心	Chinese Coordination Centre of World Evangelism (CCCOWE)
Sun Yat-sen/ Sun Wen	孫逸仙/孫文	Sun Yat-sen/ Sun Wen (1866–1925)
Ta Zhiwei	禰智偉	Freeman Huen (Huen Chi-wai)
Xi Jinping	習近平	Xi Jinping
Xia Baolong	夏寶龍	Xia Baolong
Xianggang jidutu xuesheng fuyin tuan qi	香港基督徒學生福音團契	Hong Kong Fellowship of Evangelical Students (HKFES)
Xianggang jiaohui gengxin yundong	香港教會更新運動	Hong Kong Church Renewal Movement
Xianggang jin xin hui lian hui	香港浸信會聯會	Baptist Convention of Hong Kong (BCHK)
Xianggang shenggonghui (Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui)	香港聖公會	Anglican Church of Hong Kong (HKSCH)
Xie Fuya	謝扶雅	Xie Fuya
Xie Zhibin	謝志斌	Xie Zhibin
Wang Mingdao (Wong Ming-tao)	王明道	Wang Mingdao (1900–1991)
Wang Weifan	汪維藩	Wang Weifan (1927–2015)
Wen Weiyao	溫偉耀	Milton Wan (Wan Wai-yiu)
Yang Mugu	楊牧谷	Arnold Yeung (1945–2002; Yeung Muk-kuk)
Yang Xinan	楊熙楠	Daniel Yeung
Yiguo liangzhi	一國兩制	One country, two systems
Yongwu pai	勇武派	The valiant

Zhong Hua sheng gong hui (Chung Hua Sheng Kung Hui)	中華聖公會	Anglican Church of China
Zhongguo jidujiao bo dao hui	中國基督教播道會	Evangelical Free Church of China
Zhongyong	中庸	The middle commonplace/the middle way

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